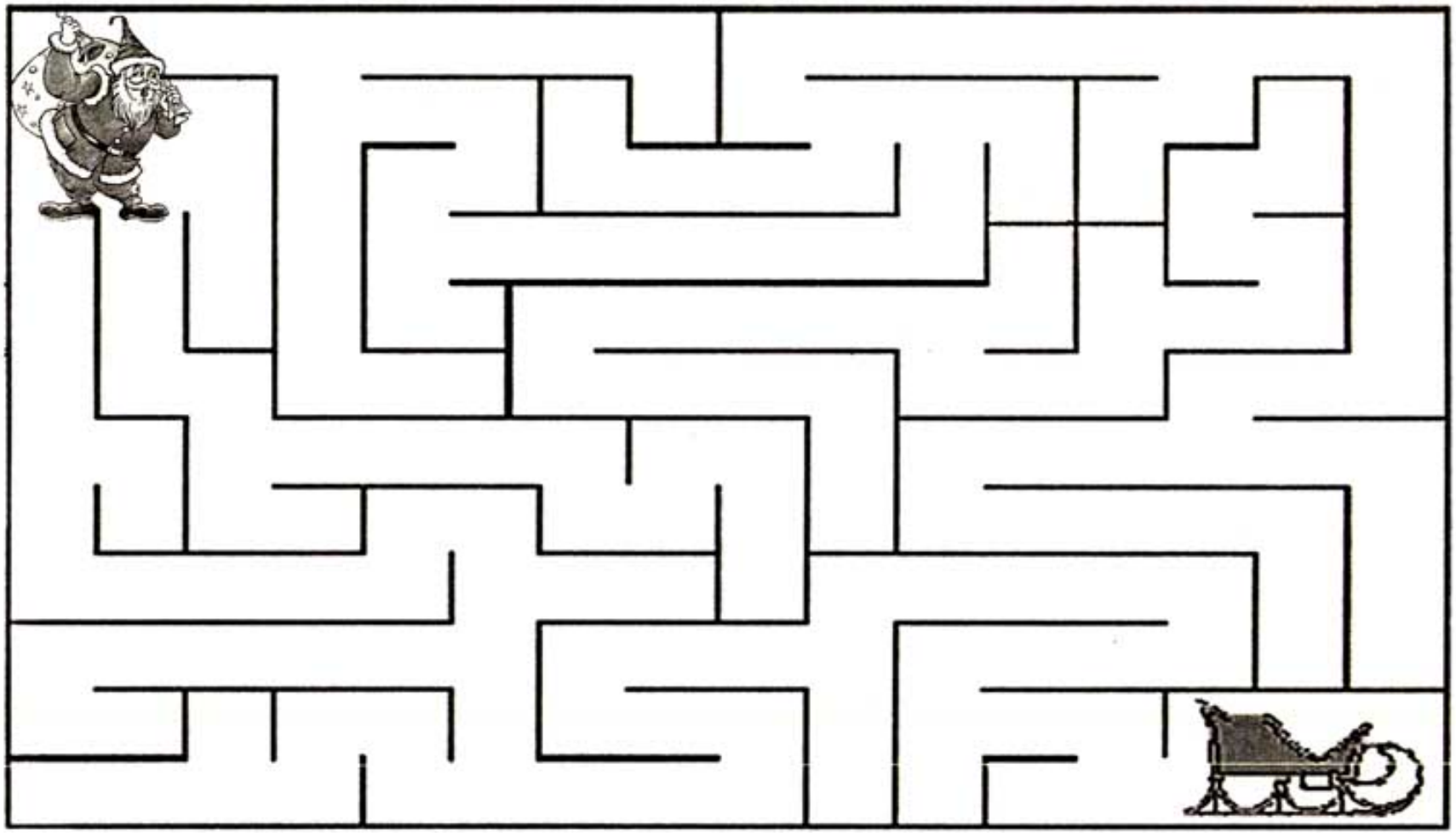
GOKULAM

December 2004 Rs.8/- The magazine for children

"SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT!"

Warne-Gilchrist Poster

HELP SANTA FIND HIS SLEIGH!



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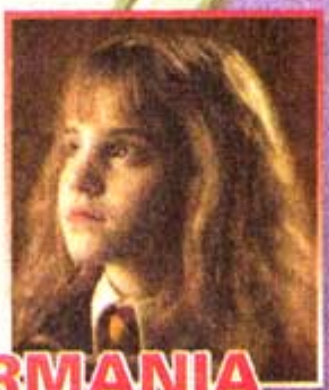

GOKULAM

DECEMBER 2004

Vol. XVII. No.6

Of all created things the loveliest,
And most divine are children.
-William Canton

12

POTTERMANIA

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The Magazine for Children

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Dear Reader,

While the cities and villages of India were reverberating to the loud bangs of Deepavali crackers, real bombs were being dropped in Fallujah, Iraq. American and Iraqi troops were fighting side by side to clear the city of insurgents. Machine guns sprayed bullets, cannons roared and many on either side lost their lives.

On the one hand, the world is shrinking. Jet travel, modern communication channels and global economic policies are speeding up the concept of one world. On the other hand, divisive forces are at work creating hatred between people of different religious and ethnic groups, all over the world.

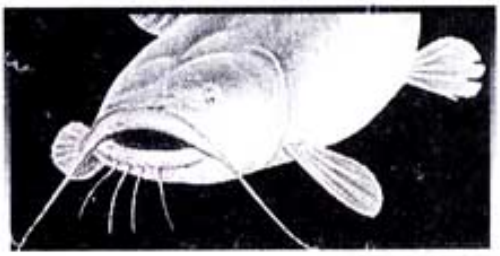
* Queen of Peace - Mother Mary

These evil forces should not succeed. Whether it is the Koran, Bible or Geetha, the fundamental message is peace and love of mankind. Tolerence is the key to the treasure box that is peace and Holy Mary, Mother of God, is referred to as "queen of peace" in christian prayers.

Love of humanity is the message that all of us should learn from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and as we light a candle on Christmas day, let it be the light of love.

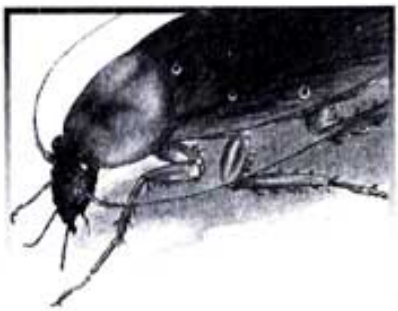
Editor

SNIPPETS



A cat has 32 muscles in a ear. →

↑ The catfish ranks first amongst animals for the maximum number of taste buds. It has over 27,000!



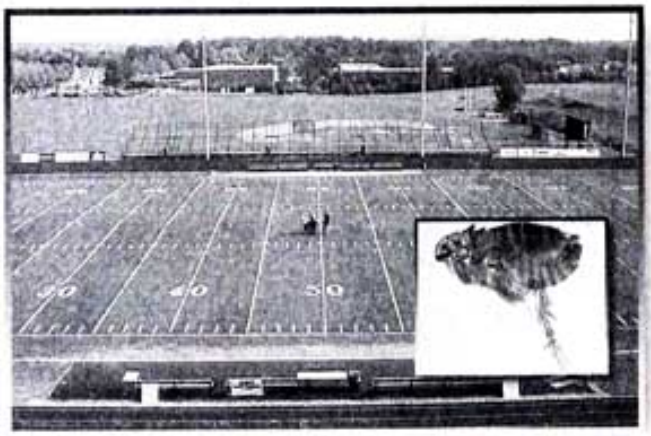
← A cockroach will live for nine days without its head, before it starves to death.

← In most advertisements of watches or clocks the time displayed is 10.10!

If you yelled for 8 years, 7 months and 6 days, you would produce enough sound energy to heat up one cup of coffee! →

Unusual facts by Shweta Pujar, Std XI, Kalpakkam

↓ The flea can jump 350 times its body length. If



we could do that, we could jump across the length of a football field!

Americans on an average eat 18 acres of pizza each day! ↓

THE ADVANTAGEOUS ADVENTURE

The entire village was quiet, except for the hoot of owls, which occassionally broke the silence. In the semi darkness of the deserted road one could see four ghostly figures walking, hurriedly, yet noiselessly. Within the next quarter of an hour, the four figures had entered the neighbouring forest.

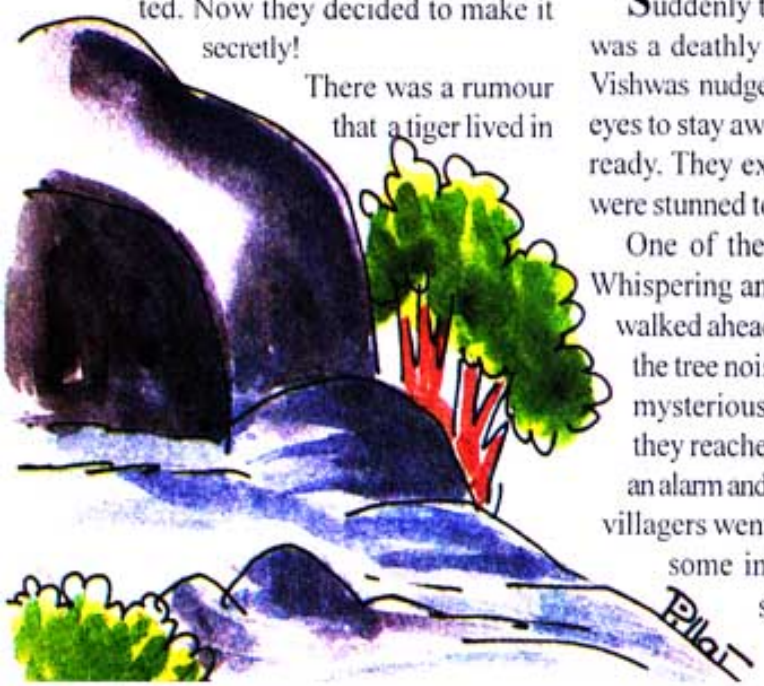
Curious to know their identity? They were not ghosts or theives, but four kids - Teju, Vishwas, Shanker and Kiran. They moved stealthily, making sure at every step, that they were not followed. For many days they had longed to visit the forest for a picnic, but were not permitted. Now they decided to make it secretly!

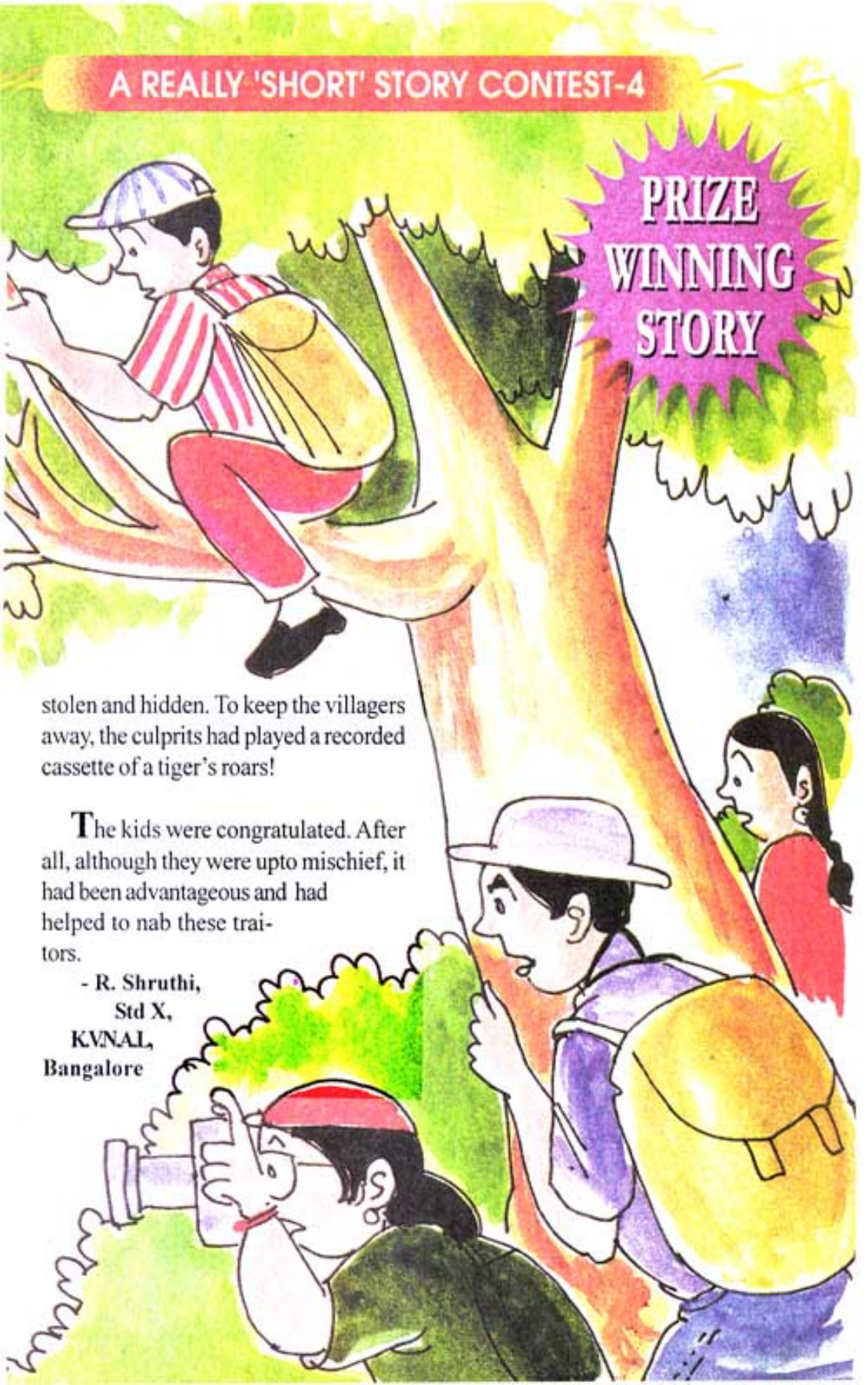
There was a rumour that a tiger lived in a cave, deep inside the forest. People had only heard it roar, but had not seen it. Yet, they kept away from the forest. Soon, the kids reached the cave. They were terrified by the tiger's deafening roars. They felt it would be safer to climb atop a tree.

Teju had a camera. She was determined to take a snap. They sat still and waited for the tiger to come out. But, they could just hear it roar. They waited till it was almost dawn. Slowly, their excitement died and they decided to get back.

Suddenly the noise stopped. There was a deathly silence. Kiran yawned. Vishwas nudged her. Shanker rubbed his eyes to stay awake. Teju had her camera ready. They expected a tiger. But they were stunned to see three men!

One of them had a tape recorder. Whispering amongst themselves, they walked ahead. The kids too slid down the tree noiselessly and followed the mysterious trio from a distance. As they reached the village, they raised an alarm and the men were caught. The villagers went along to the cave. After some investigation, they found some very valuable idols,





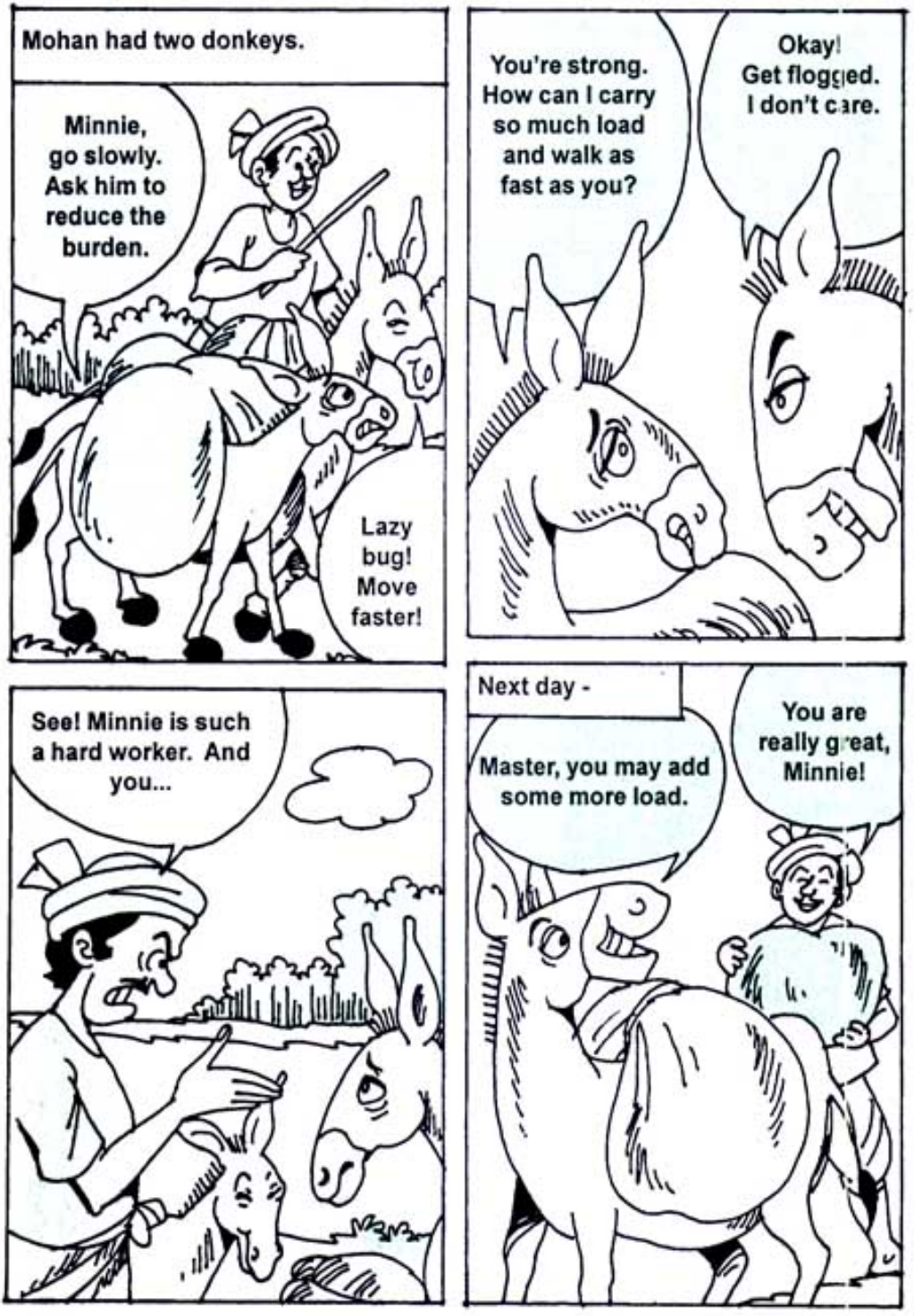
stolen and hidden. To keep the villagers away, the culprits had played a recorded cassette of a tiger's roars!

The kids were congratulated. After all, although they were upto mischief, it had been advantageous and had helped to nab these traitors.

- R. Shruthi,
Std X,
K.V.N.A.L,
Bangalore

PITY

Story: *Raji Radha*
Pic: *Pillai*



Master! Please reduce the load. I'm unable to carry so much. You give me so little to eat...
For the work done by you, that is more than enough Winnie!
That evening, Winnie escaped from Mohan and ran away.
Minnie came to know...
Aha! Now I'm King! Master will now have to treat me well!
Next day -
Master, you have overloaded me. Please remove some...
Winnie has run away. Now you'll have to do all the work, understand? Get going!
Oh dear! If only I had taken pity on Winnie, I wouldn't have had to suffer like this!

Vaishnavi Krishnan, grand daughter of film director Sridhar, and three other fifth graders (classmates) won 'Scholastic's Nationwide Kids Are Authors' competition. Their book 'Nora The Nonapus' was selected from among thousands of entries in the U.S. and was published in July this year.

Vaishnavi and her team - mates from Estes Hills Elementary School, N. Carolina, USA, did the entire work from conceptualising, writing and illustrating the book, as a team. The contest was open to kids from K.G to eighth grade. She has earned herself a part in a musical production 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow' and is running for Student Government.

When contacted in USA over the phone, this is what the deep thinker, shy eleven year old had to say about her achievements in various fields.

Congrats, Vaishnavi! 11 years old and you are already a literary figure! How did you get around to writing?

I wrote 'Nora the Nonapus' when I was ten years old along with my classmates. But even when I was in Kindergarten I wrote a story about a ladybird without spots. I love writing poems. I just love writing 'differently'!'

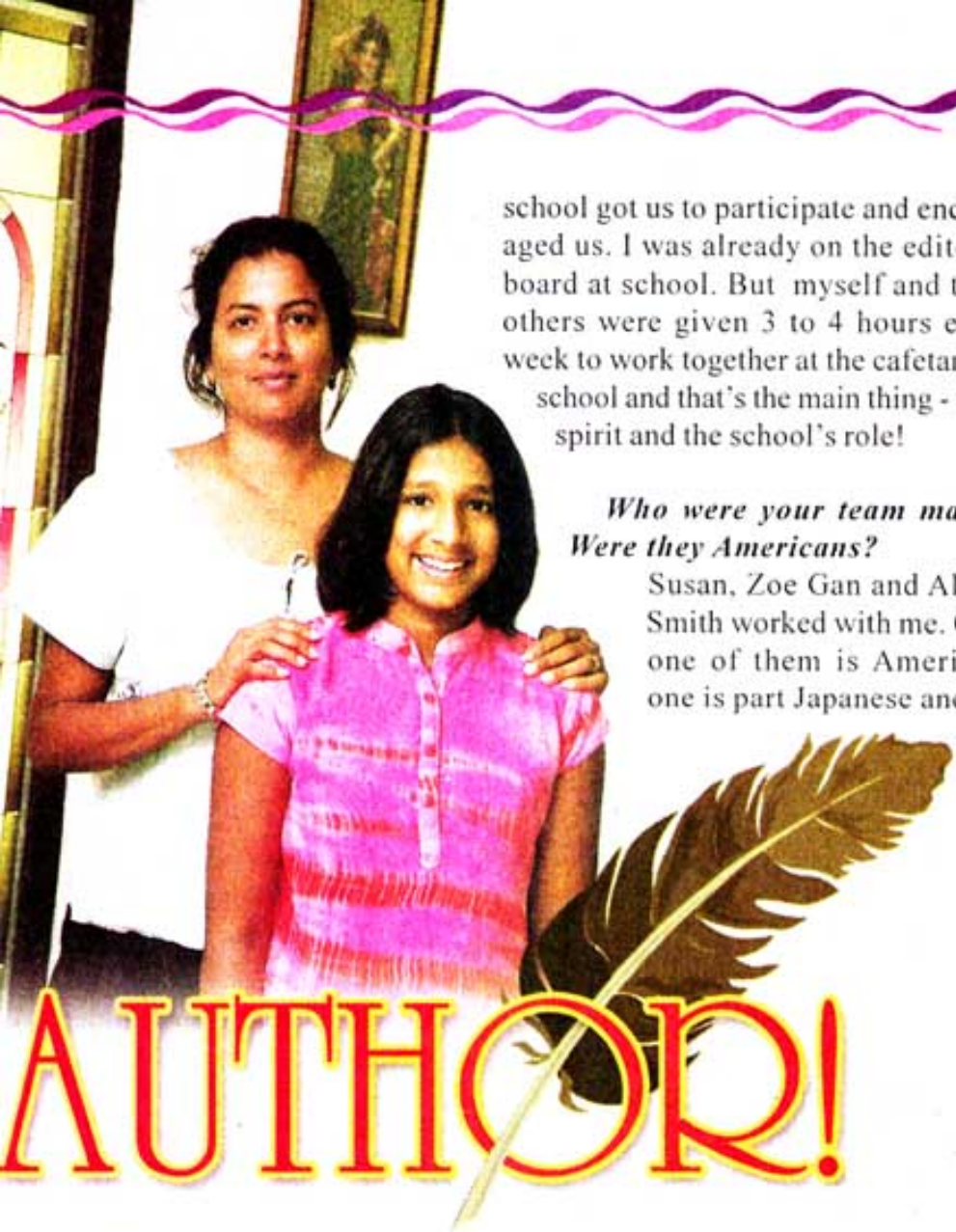
KID

Any literary figures who inspired you?

My maternal grandfather, Sridhar, who has written and directed films in Indian languages. My paternal grandfather, Justice Krishnaswamy Reddy gave me several books on Indian mythology and characters which made me escape into the world of make believe!

Were you born in India?

I was born on 9th June, 93 in the U.S. But I visit India ev-



AUTHOR!

school got us to participate and encouraged us. I was already on the editorial board at school. But myself and three others were given 3 to 4 hours every week to work together at the cafetaria in school and that's the main thing - team spirit and the school's role!

Who were your team mates? Were they Americans?

Susan, Zoe Gan and Alison Smith worked with me. Only one of them is American, one is part Japanese and the other Chinese - Malaysian.

ery year.

Coming to Scholastic's 'Kids Are Authors' contest, how did you get to participate? Did you expect to win?

No! I was quite surprised when they announced in the school assembly that we had won. Actually the

Truly international, eh? Did you allocate jobs for each person? How difficult was it?

Actually, all of us did everything - writing, planning, illustrations, layout etc. It

Interviewed by Priya Ravi

was fun.

Why 'Nora The Nonapus'?

An octopus has eight tentacles. We wanted to make it different. So nine tentacles became 'Nonapus!' We did a lot of research on volcanoes too!

What was the award you got?

We got a gold medal each, a certificate and copy of the book. The release of the book in July was a grand affair and I autographed a lot of books. That was thrilling. My school got 100 copies of the book.

What are your other interests?

Poetry is my favourite. I am currently in a musical production. I got the part after two rounds of audition. I just have to see something interesting and poetry just flows out of me! I learn Bharatanatyam and Indian classical music.

Who is your favourite author? J.K.R?

Oh no! I don't like Harry Potter. My favorite is Roald Dahl.

Do you have siblings? Do they write too?

I have a nine year old brother.He would like to be President of America!

He'll have to wait for quite a while then! How about you? Would you like to settle in the US or in India?

Maybe in the US or elsewhere, I can't say...

What would you like to do? Step into grandpa's shoes and write or act in movies?

I like to write stories and poetry. Maybe acting too! I plan to enter other contests this year.

What would you like to say to Gokulam readers?

Well, I feel kids in India are always studying and seem to have less time for other things. But friends: PLEASE FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS!

Thanks Vaishnavi, All the best for your future pursuits.

Dear Readers,

Radha Aunty will continue the question / answer column on English grammar, pronunciation, meanings etc. We request you to send in your queries. Radha Aunty will answer these every month.

Questions (by post) must be sent only on a postcard with your name, age, class, school and residential address clearly mentioned. Only one question per postcard.

Last date for January issue: ***5.12.2004***

Gokulam, 47-NP, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Ekkaduthangal, Chennai - 600 032

In a dramatic development, Uma Bharti has been suspended from the primary membership of the B.J.P. She had all along felt that the B.J.P leadership did not give sufficient importance to her yatra with the national flag. (Ref:GOKULAM, Oct'04 issue) She had always been outspoken and had criticized the second rung leadership without hesitation. At a recent meeting of the B.J.P, in full glare of the media, she interrupted Advani during his speech to accuse some of the leaders and insisted on a discussion then and there. When this was refused, she staged a walkout challenging Advani to take action against her. The top leaders on the dais were naturally embarrassed resulting in her ouster from the party.

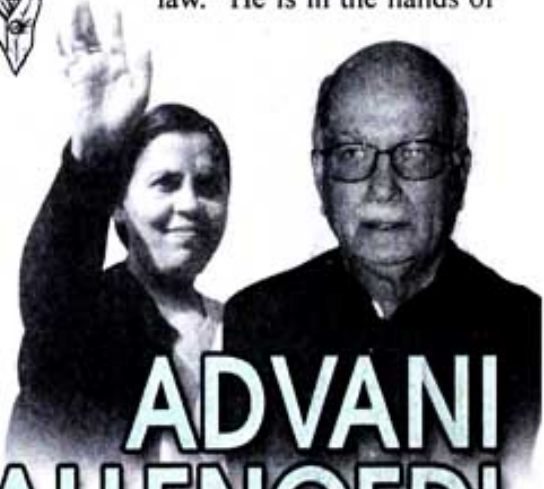
• • •

Prices of petroleum products like diesel and cooking gas have been raised to unbearable levels. The public as well as political parties are protesting. But what's rather funny is that parties supporting the Congress at the Centre and being part of the coalition government are also protesting! This is looked upon as a political double game. The price rise is sure to have a cascading effect and the prices of all commodities will go up besides all forms of transport becoming costlier. The reason given for the price hike is that international oil prices have gone up. But the argument sounds rather hollow when viewed in the context of wasteful government expenditures and unnecessary subsidies in several areas.

• • •

Yasser Arafat, the undisputed leader of the P.L.O or Palestinian Liberation Organisation was hospitalised in Paris, for what was described as irreversible coma. Who will be the next leader? Will the transition be smooth? Is there anyone who can be as majestic and as influential as he was? While all these questions still remained unanswered, Arafat's wife threw a bombshell by saying that the second rung P.L.O leaders were plotting to bury Arafat while he was still alive! Ofcourse, this was vehemently denied. Meanwhile it was confirmed that Arafat was on a life support system and was kept alive artificially. Switching off the system was ruled out since it was against Islamic law. "He is in the hands of God" said a Palestinian leader. Thereafter, the end came swiftly.

The great leader of the Arabs is no more.



ADVANI CHALLENGED!

POT(TER) POURRI!

Good news for all Potter fans! J.K.R has revealed the titles of three chapters from the next book.

Chapter 2: SPINNERS END
Chapter 6: DRACO'S DETOUR
Chapter 14: FELIS FELICIS

These titles have been revealed in a mysterious way. Check it out for yourselves!

Step 1 - Go to the site www.jkrowling.co.uk. You must find a ring shaped icon on a really messy desk. When you hover around this, you see a question mark. Press the button.

Step - 2. You are transported to a door, where later appears a pale and ghostly message and some golden keys. Click on the right key to fit into the door's key hole.

Step 3 - You can now find a secret drawer containing a riddle to be solved. Your job's done. Finally the titles appear.

- M. Shiva Prakash, Std VIII, Sudarshan Vidya Mandir, Bangalore

POTTER FUTURE

For all HP fans here is some information about the

future books.

We are going to find out about the circumstances of Voldemort's birth as well as what Dudley saw/heard, when he was near the dementors.

Winky will never be cured of her Butterbeer addiction.

Remus Lupin is a halfblood.

A new character called "Mc Claggen" will be introduced.

Dumbledore's Patronus is a phoenix.

Dumbledore's brother, Aberforth, who was prosecuted for "performing inappropriate charms on a goat," is actually the barman at 'Hog's Head' pub. He was vaguely familiar to Harry and the pub smelled of goats!"

Theodore Nott a friend of Draco Malfoy, is more clever and cunning than Malfoy, who is actually quite scared of Nott.

Blaise Zabini, a character mentioned while detailing the sorting ceremony during Harry's first year, will have an important role in future.

- Mithila Ananth, Std XII, VCPUC, Bangalore

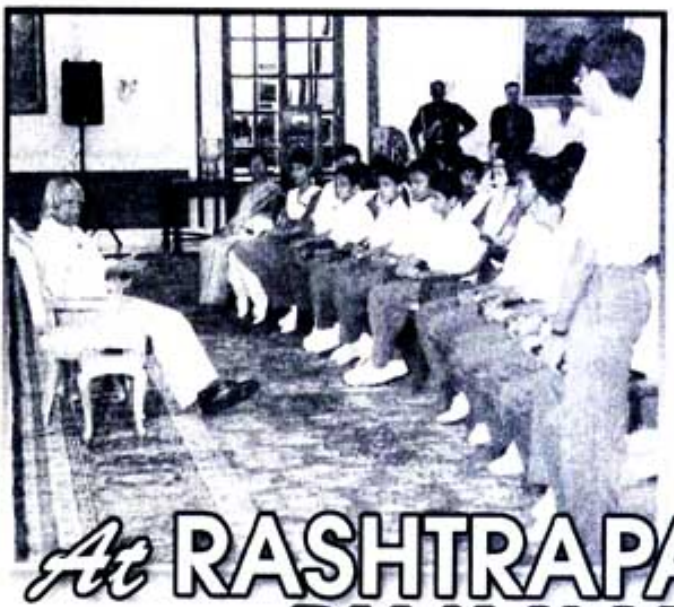
Hats off to Hermione

Hermione is the best friend of Harry.
Sharing his adventures that are scary
Ron is also her friend
Who is at his wit's end!
She spends a lot of time at the library
She leaves it so rarely
She is smart 'n shrewd
But not always rude.
Rude only to Crabe, Goyle 'n Malfoy
Who are like stupid 'n useless toys
She has a cat named Crookshanks
Who is cuddly and not upto pranks
She's got a neat handwriting
For which the teachers have a liking
She's awfully good in each subject
Which obviously we can't object
I hope I see her someday
With happiness 'n gay
I will get her autograph
Which I will show my friends 'n laugh.

- Nisha Nandakumar Std IX, K.V. Ashok Nagar, Chennai

At RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

Every year our school, Chinmaya Vidyalaya takes us on an educational tour. But this year we had a unique tour. We met the Rani of Jaipur at her palace and had a glimpse of the President of New Zealand at Agra. On the 18th of October, 2004, 118 students and 13 teachers met the President of India, His Excellency A.P.J Abdul Kalam. The sight of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, flanked by North and south Block, representing the seat of power, was awe - inspiring. After a brief security check, we were let into the residence of the First Citizen of our country. We were taken to the Yellow Drawing Room and after a few minutes the President entered.



We greeted him with the traditional Hari Om. He directed us to sit and asked us what topic we would like him to speak on. The answers were varied, ranging from nature to his childhood, and also our contribution to the country etc. The President then began to speak on this mix of topics. This session was punctuated by questions from the students and the knowledgable and highly interesting answers of the President. Dr. Kalam emphasized the importance of teachers in the educational process and encouraged us to become a part of the movement to make society righteous. Each of his answers reflected his commitment to the nation and his grasp of the problems facing our country. All of us were struck by his simplicity. He spoke on the areas of emphasis to make our nation a developed one and listened patiently to every query put before him. He felt that self - doubt was one of the biggest obstacles in India's quest to become a developed country. The President focussed on the role the youth can play in this mission.

It ended with tea and snacks in the adjacent Grey Drawing Room. The President mingled with all of us for a short time.

We came out of the Rashtrapati Bhavan thankful at having met such a forceful personality and secure in the knowledge that with him at the helm, our nation has a bright future. We were also thankful to our school and teachers for having made elaborate arrangements so that we could freely mingle with the First Citizen of India.

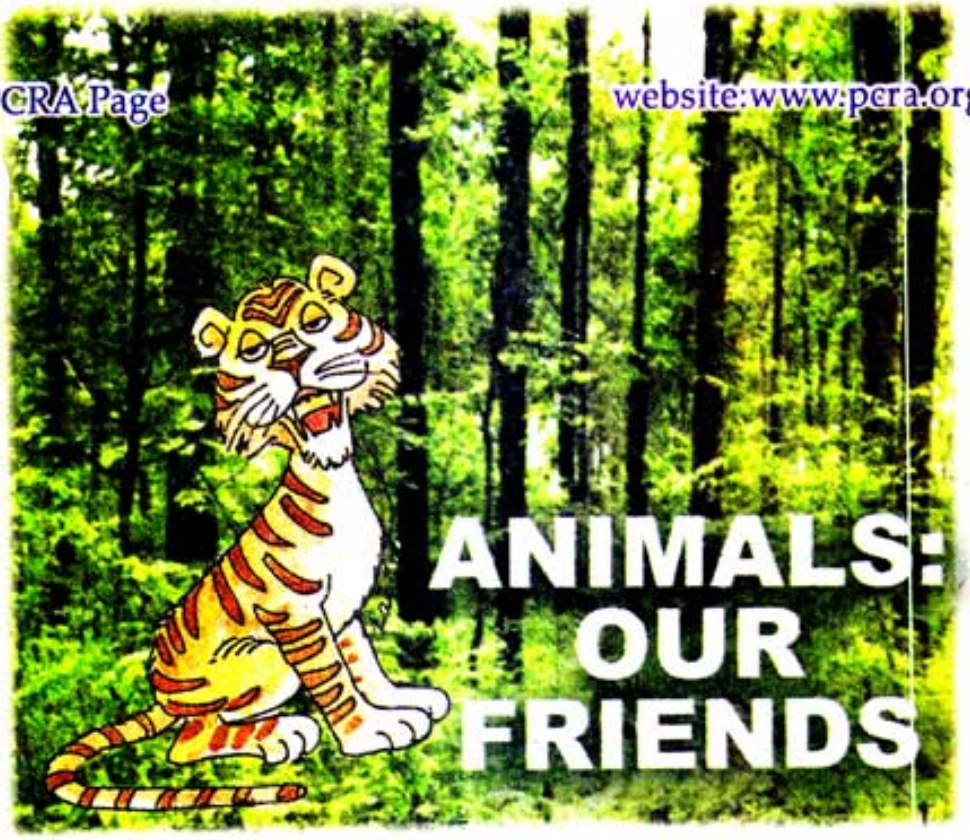
- N. Rakshit Gupta, Std X,
Chinmaya Vidhyalaya,
Chennai

BANGALORE CITY SPECIAL!

ATTENTION BANGALORE READERS!

After the Business Capital of India, Mumbai, we look forward to contributions from the I.T Capital! Residents of the GARDEN CITY - it's your turn to boast of your 'Bengaluru'. (Oops! Your city is still called Bangalore!)

Send us articles, poems, typical dishes, travel experiences, stories etc etc. Remember to mark the envelope 'BANGALORE SPECIAL.' Enclose pictures if possible and rush them to us latest by **24.12.2004**, so that they can be featured in our **FEBRUARY 2005**, BANGALORE CITY SPECIAL!



Friends, all of you know us. We are really proud of the exalted status accorded to us as India's National Animal.

Not only we tigers, but the entire animal kingdom seems to be diminishing. We seem to be on the path to extinction.

Animals, birds, insects, aquatic creatures - all of us belong to this world, just like you. Is it fair on the part of humans, who are more intelligent than us to endanger our species?

Man is destroying our forest homes, hunting us and pushing several animals into the 'Endangered Species' list.

It is not enough to just enact laws prohibiting hunting. All of you must think of us as your friends and allow us to coexist with you.

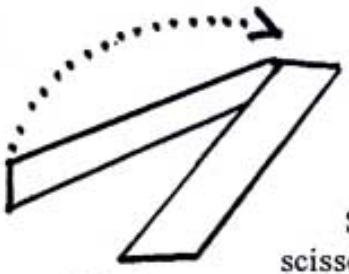


Fig 1

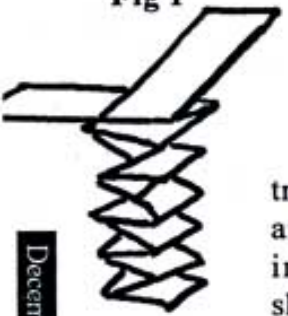


Fig 2

Impress your friends and relatives by sending them pop-up Christmas cards!

Christmas Greeting Card:

Materials required:

Sheet of white paper, chart paper, scissors, cotton, glue, red ink and decorative items like felt pens, glitters, colour paper etc.

Method:

1) On the white sheet, draw an X'mas tree and a gift box. Cut them out separately and decorate them. Dip some cotton in red ink and leave it to dry in the shade.

2) Draw Santa Claus on the greeting card (folded chart paper). Paste red cotton for his dress and white cotton for his beard, mousache etc.

3) Cut 4 strips of paper (10cm x icm) Place one end of a strip on one end of another as shown in Fig 1. Fold as shown in Fig 2 to create a springy structure. You will have two such paper springs.

4) Attach one end of the first spring to the gift box and the other end to the inside of the greeting card. Similarly, attach the X'mas tree.

5) Decorate the tree and gift box with glitters, silver stars and ribbons.

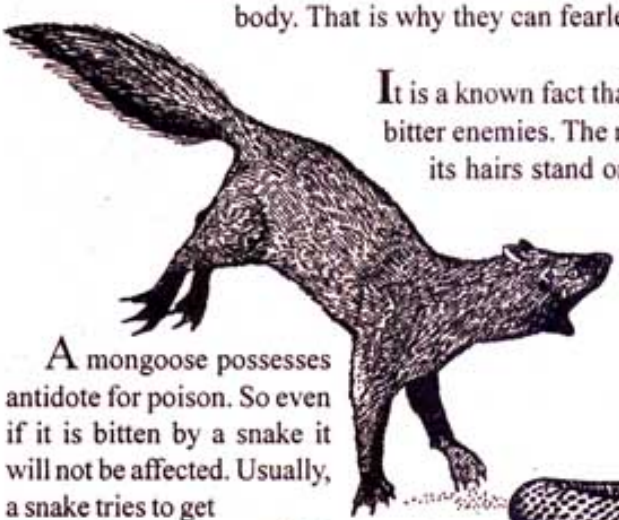
Your greeting card is ready.

- Ra. Aadhirai,
Std VII, K.V.
Meenambakkam,
Chennai

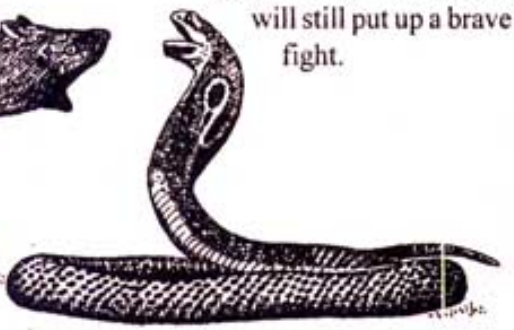
SNAKES HAVE FOES TOO!

AAZHI

SNAKES! Terryfying, isn't it? But snakes have enemies too. In fact, for a small snake even a large snake is a threat. There can be a threat to life only if the snake's poison enters the blood stream. Most creatures which kill and devour snakes are thick skinned with a thick layer of fat underlying the skin and have a hairy body. That is why they can fearlessly attack snakes.



It is a known fact that the mongoose and the snake are bitter enemies. The moment a mongoose sees a snake, its hairs stand on end, ready to attack. The snake gets terrified. However it will still put up a brave fight.



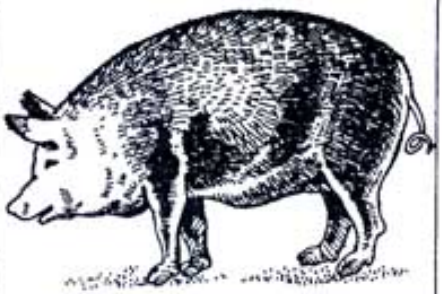
A mongoose possesses antidote for poison. So even if it is bitten by a snake it will not be affected. Usually, a snake tries to get away from the mongoose.

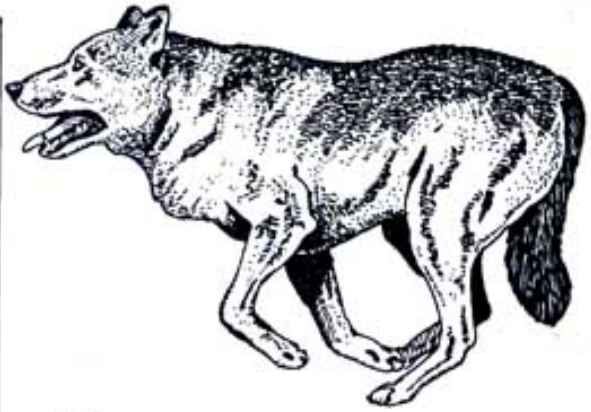
An Opussum, which is similar to a mongoose, also tears snakes apart.

The South African Badger which is a bearlike animal is an enemy of the snake too. The badger is a thickskinned hairy creature. The snake's poisonous fangs cannot penetrate its thick skin and hence the venom cannot enter its blood stream. The badger, with its sharp long claws, tears apart the snake and eats it.

The porcupine is the prime enemy of the poisonous Viper. The porcupine pierces and tears apart snakes with its sharp thick needles. In a duel with the snake, the porcupine huddles itself into a ball such that its needles stand out and pierce the snake. Once the snake is killed, it devours it. No creature can harm a porcupine.

Pigs can crush snakes with their sheer weight. Pigs stamp on the snakes, and destroy them with their teeth. But they do not eat snakes.

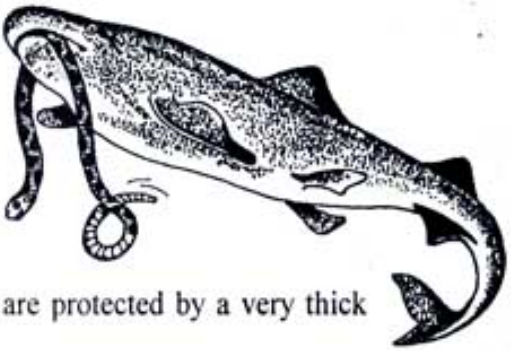




Wolves feed on venomous snakes too!.

Deer can stamp on snakes with their strong feet and kill them.

We all know that snakes feed on frogs. But an 'Amazonian Forest Frog' can swallow even a large snake. This frog takes 36 hours to gobble up a snake!



The main threat to sea snakes is from sharks. Sea snakes are very poisonous. But sharks are not affected, because they are protected by a very thick skin.

In the forests of South Africa, red ants pose a severe threat to 'adders'. Thousands of red ants get together and attack a snake. They can polish off a whole snake within an hour!

Thick winged, strong beaked and swift birds kill snakes. Egyptian storks are the snakes' born enemies. They hold onto snakes with their feet and kill them with their long beaks and eat them.

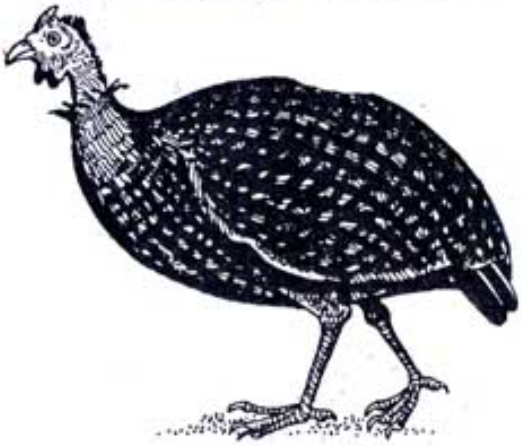
African 'Secretary Birds' feed mainly on venomous snakes. This bird picks up snakes and throws it into the air. The snake lands on the ground, battered and bruised, making it easy prey for the bird.

Owls have sharp beaks. They feed on rattle snakes. They catch small snakes rather than bigger ones.

Sweden's Crowned Pheasants' love snakes! their favourite meal is the snake!

In forests, sometimes, the peacock even hunts out snakes from their homes and devours them!

People who raise 'Guinea Fowls' at home need not fear snakes. These fowls go after snakes and kill them!



In America, the 'Condor' a big eagle like bird is a big threat to the 'Boa' snake. The Condor tears Boas apart and kills them!

I. WORD POWER

Being late for work or school is a very bad habit. But here are some words which end up being late! Identify them with the help of clues given below:

a. To ask or demand: ◯◯◯◯◯ late

b. To get it to work as one pleases: ◯◯◯◯◯◯ late

c. To recount, narrate: ◯◯ late

d. We write on it : ◯ late.

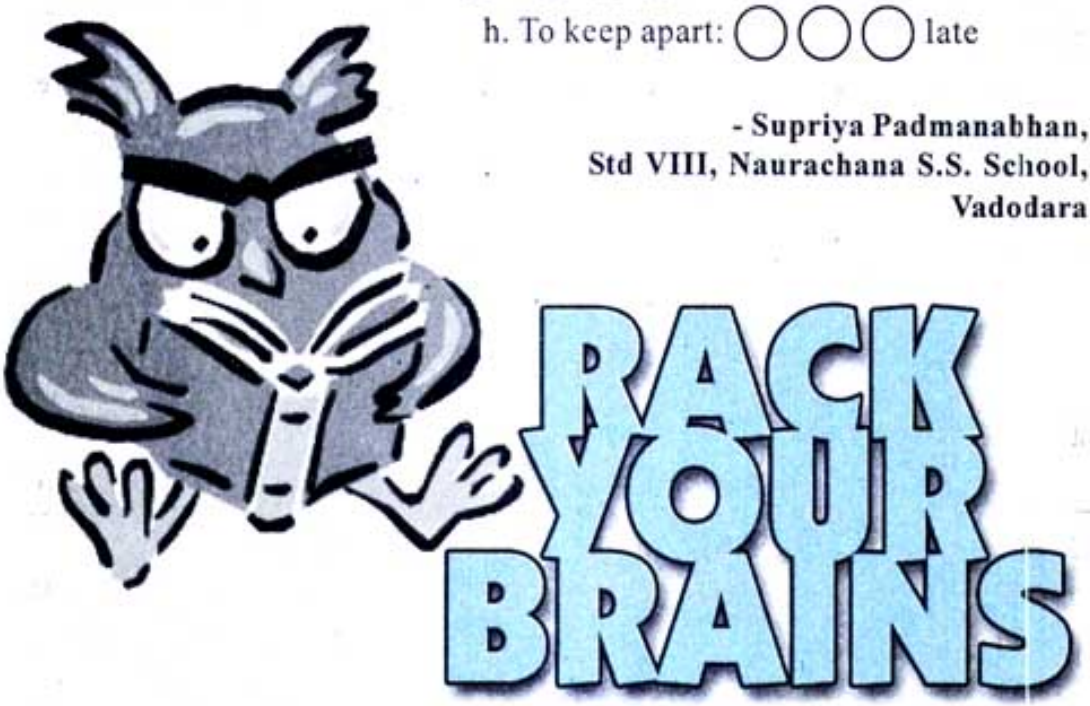
e. Food is served on it: ◯ late.

f. To regulate by or adjust: ◯◯◯◯ late.

g. To make a pretense of: ◯◯◯◯ late

h. To keep apart: ◯◯◯ late

- Supriya Padmanabhan,
Std VIII, Naurachana S.S. School,
Vadodara



II. MIND YOUR 'O'S!

The following group of letters will make perfect words if 'O's are placed

correctly in them. For eg PRTCL will become PROTOCOL by placing 3'O's appropriately. Try your hand at these.

1) STRERM 2) SCILGY
3) FRENN 4) RTHDX
5) FFSHT

- R.Prasanna, Karur, Tamilnadu

III. MIND - TRAP!

Here are a few brain-teasers. **CHALLENGE!**

a) "The yolk of the egg are white" or "The yolk of the egg is white." Which is right?

b) Even if they are starving, natives living in the Arctic will never eat a penguin's egg! Why?

c) When can you add two to eleven and get one as the correct answer?

d) In the calender, some months have 30 days and some have 31. How many months have 28 days?

- R. Durga, Coimbatore

IV. FUNNY RIDDLES

1. Why did Simpson bury his car battery?
2. Which is Osama Bin Laden's favourite soccer team?
3. Name Mickey's wife's vehicle.
4. Why was the Egyptian boy confused?
5. It comes once in a year, twice in a week, but is never there in a month! What is it?

- R. Priscilla, Std IX, Zion Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Chennai

Answers

I a) postulate b) manipulate c) relate d) slate e) plate f)modulate g) simulate h) Isolate

II 1) Storeroom 2) Sociology 3) Forenoon 4) Orthodox 5) Offschool

III a) Neither. The egg yolk is yellow in colour b) Penguins are not found in the Arctic. They live in the Southern hemisphere! c) When you add 2 hours to 11'o clock it becomes 1'o clock. d) All the twelve months!

IV. 1. The mechanic told him that his battery was dead! 2. The Newyork Jets 3. Minnie van (Mini van) 4) Because his daddy was a mummy! 5) The letter 'E'.

CAKES 'N BAKES

Merry Christmas! Tuck into delicious home baked cakes and pies this Christmas!

Quick'n Easy Chocolate Cake

Ingredients:

Egg - 1
Flour (Maida) - 1½ cup
Cocoa - ½ cup
Oil - ½ cup
Curd - ½ cup
Chocolate essence - 1 tsp
Baking Soda - ¾ tsp
Sugar - 1 cup
Hot water - ½ cup

Method : Sieve cocoa, flour and soda. Mix all the ingredients listed thoroughly in a large bowl. Pour into a greased cake tin and bake for 30 minutes at 180°C in a pre-heated oven.

Michael Ranjit Singh, Std VII,
Lady Andal School, Chennai

Apple Pie:

Ingredients:

Flour (Maida) - 2½ cups
Vegetable oil - ½ cup
Cold Milk - 2 tsp
White sugar - 1½ cups
Apples - 6 (cored and sliced)
Cinnamon powder - ¾ tsp
Butter - ½ tsp
Nutmeg powder - ½ tsp
Salt - a pinch

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Mix well 1½ cups flour, oil, milk, 1½ tsp sugar and salt. Grease a pie pan and spread the dough evenly over the bottom and sides.

For the filling, mix ¾ cup sugar, 3tbsp maida, cinnamon and nutmeg. Sprinkle this mixture over apple slices.

For the topping, mix ½ cup flour, ½ cup sugar and butter until crumbly in texture.Sprinkle over the apples. Bake for 45 min. in the oven.

A. Srute,
Std VII, St. Anthony's Sr.Sec School,
New Delhi

M. Samyuktha,
Aged 11, St. Paul's Convent,
Davangere, Karnataka

V. Ganga,
Std VI,
S.I.A High School,
Dombivili (W)

S. Kavi Arasi,
Std II, Vellammal Matric
Hr. Sec School,
Chennai

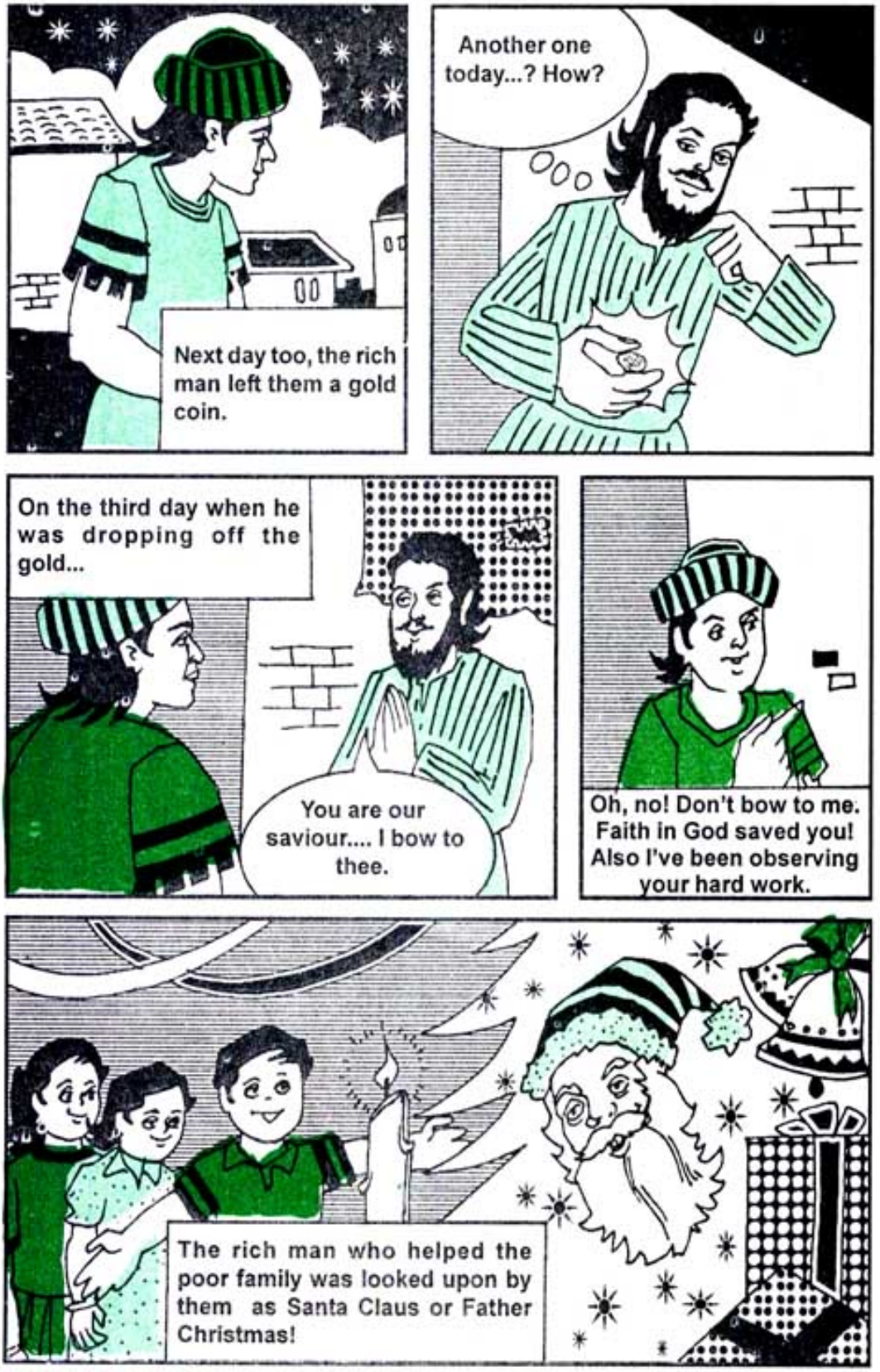
S. Sriraaman,
Std VII, DTEA Senior
Secondary School
New Delhi

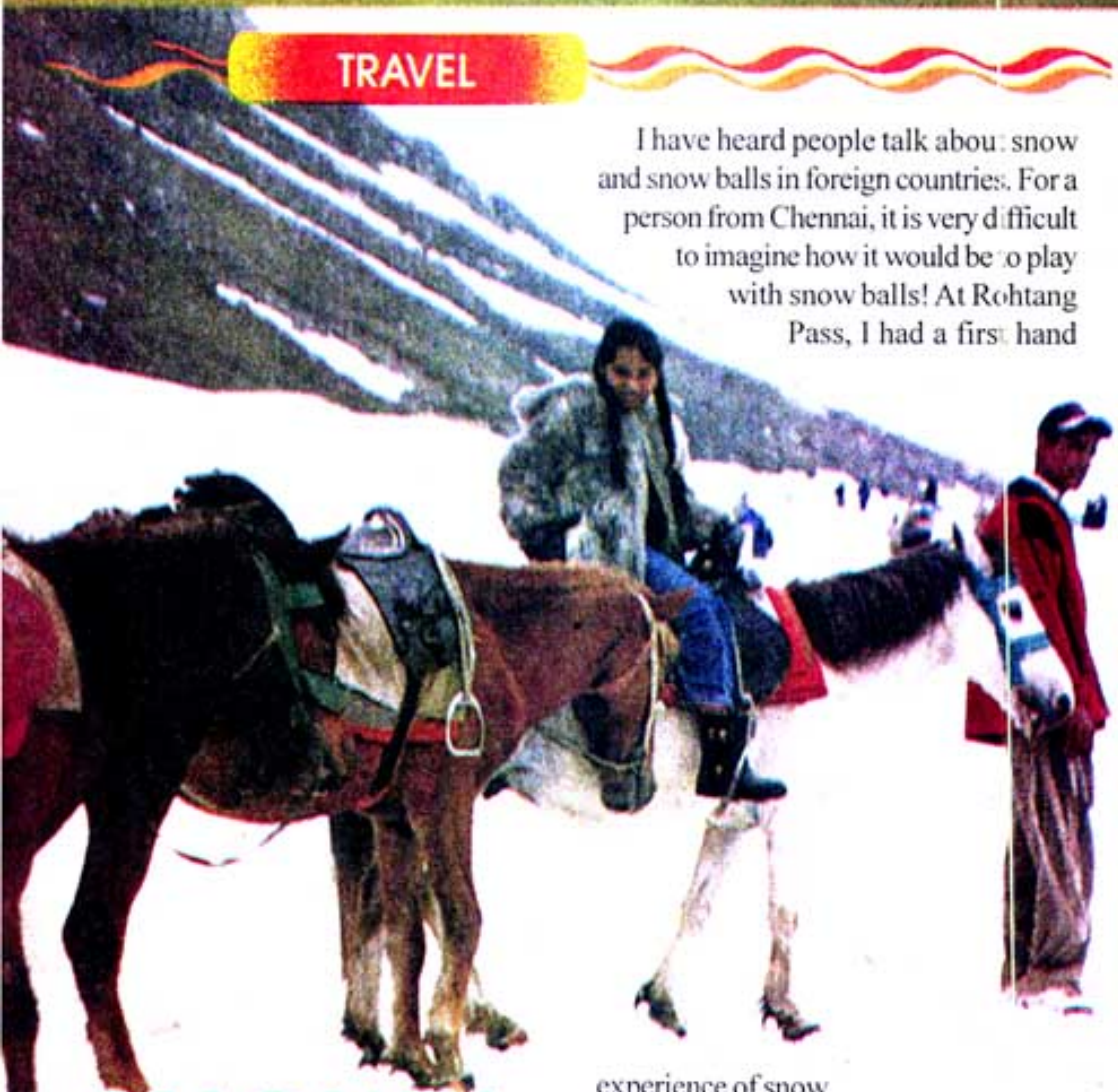
S. Prudivya, Std VI,
Holy Cross Kapa, Raipur,
Chattisgarh

ART GALLERY

THE GIFT

Story, Picture : Ramki


Next day too, the rich man left them a gold coin.
Another one today...? How?
On the third day when he was dropping off the gold...
You are our saviour.... I bow to thee.
Oh, no! Don't bow to me. Faith in God saved you! Also I've been observing your hard work.
The rich man who helped the poor family was looked upon by them as Santa Claus or Father Christmas!



SNOWY HEIGHTS!

I have heard people talk about snow and snow balls in foreign countries. For a person from Chennai, it is very difficult to imagine how it would be to play with snow balls! At Rohtang Pass, I had a first hand experience of snow.

Rohtang Pass is located at a height of 4111m A.S.L (13,400 ft) and is 51 kms from Manali on the Keylong highway. We had to cross two mountains to reach this high peak which looks down over the Lahaul Valley.

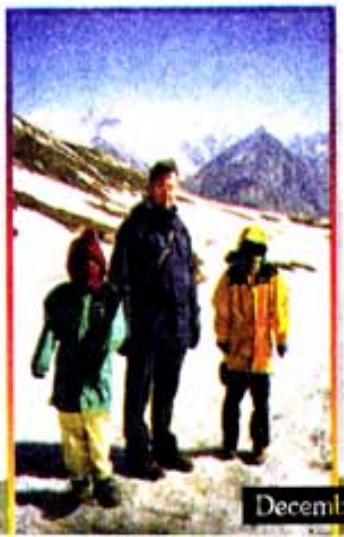
I went with my family on a trip to Shimla. On the whole, it was a very enjoyable holiday, but to me a visit to the Rohtang Pass was really memorable.

It was indeed a beautiful, marvellous and undescribable experience. There was little

On the sides of the steep road, stood small tents occupied by soldiers of our army who stand guard against terrorist attacks on both sides of the road, one could see the beautiful flowing waters of the Beas river. In fact, at Rohtang, there is a small temple at the top of the pass with a spring which is the source of the Beas. Doshohar lake is located to the left of the pass.

The driver of our vehicle must have been a very experienced one to have negotiated all the curves and bends. However some of the passengers had to use paper bags because of travel sickness!

We finally reached Rohtang Pass which is the only access to Lahaul valley from Kule Valley. The Pass is open from June to September. However, some trekkers use it earlier. Rohtang is called the 'CINEMA SHOT SPOT' because several movies have been shot here!



greenery all around. The whole place was covered with snow and we had a great time throwing snowballs at each other. There were many activites like skiing, horse riding etc.

At 'Zero point' (0^0) we could feel that there was less oxygen in the air. I was amazed to see the weather change. First it was sunny, then cloudy. Next it rained and then snowed. We built small igloos and loved wearing the furry coats,boots and gloves although we looked funny in them! We handled the skiing equipments clumsily and made a fool of ourselves! But friends, I can tell you I really enjoyed myself!

- S. Prashanthi, Std VI, Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan SSSchool, Chennai

SILLY SQUABBLES!

Dear Grandma,

I love cleaning up. But my brother messes up my table and shelf. I am patient; but it does not last long, since he irritates me very much. As a result, we fight over silly things. Please help!

- Susan Raj Kumari, Chennai

Dear Susan,

The problem that you have described is very common among siblings. Brothers and sisters love each other dearly at heart; but outwardly they tease each other in various ways. Talk to your brother. Explain that quarreling with each other is just waste of time and energy. Instead, if both of you get together on an interesting hobby or game, it would be productive, healthy and useful. Once you start sharing a common interest, both of you will forget the past and stop teasing each other. If this doesn't work and your brother continues to tease you, the best way to teach him a lesson would be just to ignore him totally. Once his self importance is gone, his sense of superiority will also vanish and he will behave properly.

I go to sleep at 3.30 am and getting up in the morning becomes difficult. How can I get rid of this bad habit?

Ananya Mishra, Bhubaneswar.

Dear Ananya,

I am really shocked! 3.30 am! My God! What do you do till then? Watch T.V? Read? Anyway as you yourself point out, it is a very bad habit. Pull yourself out of bed one day at 5 am and I'm sure you will feel sleepy by 9 pm the same day. Follow the maxim, "early to bed and early to rise is the best way to be healthy, happy and wise" If my suggestion doesn't work, I'm afraid you will

have to see a good neurologist doctor.

I study so much for maths, but when I

enter the exam hall I forget everything! Please advise.

M.Sushma, Mulky

Dear Sushma,

You may study a lot; but are you understanding the steps in each mathematical problem? Do you absorb the logic behind each step? If you do, you won't feel nervous when entering the exam hall. Neither will you forget. Going blank even after having read a lot is a result of nervousness which you can overcome by (a) understanding the subject and (b) by answering several old exam papers at home regularly and correcting yourself. This will build up self-confidence.

Whenever a teacher is absent and we have a free period, I start studying in class instead of wasting my time. But this causes jealousy in a classmate and she creates problems for me. What am I to do?

Himanshi Sahu, Chattisgarh

Dear Himanshi,

Your classmate is following a "dog in the manger" policy. She will not study; neither will she allow others to study. It is not good for either of you. Tell her so and inform her that if she continues to create trouble, you will have to report the matter to the principal. You must also make her realise that you are her good friend and it is just because of that you are giving her a warning. You can invite her for joint studies during leisure periods which will remove

jealousy and improve friendship, besides being useful to both of you.

Love,
Grandmaworm

Try your hand at Science Fiction this time. Create a story, based in a **'VILLAGE'** but make sure there is an **ALIEN INVASION!** Remember, the word limit is 350.

LAST DATE : 20.12.2004

Send in your entries to :

Gokulam, 47-NP, Jawaharlal Nehru Road,
Ekkaduthangal, Chennai - 600 032.

- The best entry will receive a prize of Rs.100/-.
- Strictly for school going children.
- Give your name, school and residential address.
- A declaration that the story is your original creation.
- The prize winning story will appear in the February 2005 issue of Gokulam.
- Next short story contest announcement January 2005.
- Mention 'short story contest' on the envelope.
- Editor's decision is final.

A REALLY 'SHORT' STORY CONTEST-6

MAGNIFICENT BOWLING!

The Border-Gavaskar trophy changes hands, and even the most die-hard Indian fan won't grudge the Aussies that.

Boy, what fabulous cricket they treated us to. Their bowling department, which was taken to the cleaners the last time they came here, fought back with a vengeance. In 2001, Glenn McGrath looked pedestrian, Shane Warne was taken apart by Laxman, and Gillespie was the only bowler who kept Australia in the hunt. The bowlers came here with their reputations on the line. In his first spell, McGrath took the wicket, of Rahul Dravid with an absolute peach of a delivery. Shane Warne, who adjusted the trajectory of his deliveries to suit Indian wickets, really came into his own only in Nagpur where he bowled what will surely rank as one of his best spells. And they were well supported by Gillespie and Kasprowicz.

Their batting - Hayden and Langer looked out of sorts throughout. But with that ends all criticism. Gilchrist played a blinder in Bangalore, Simon Katich showed us why the Aussies rate him so high, and Damien Martyn, man-of-the-series, played with such authority and precision that you wonder why his place in the side was in jeopardy a few months back. Michael Clarke was the find of the tour. Making his debut on the turning wickets in India, but he came equipped with a fantastic technique and an attacking temperament. Judging by his decisive footwork and shot selection, he seems to have tremendous belief in himself.

India, well, winning the last Test was a good achievement, but we were distinctly second best. Last month I wrote that the Indian batting is not in form, but just needs one good innings to get back into the groove. There were two occasions - a promising partnership between Sehwag and Dravid in the first innings in Chennai, and an exciting one between Laxman and Tendulkar in the last Test match.

Our bowling kept us in the hunt. Kumble and Harbhajan, bowling in tandem, were absolutely magnificent. Zaheer Khan came into his own towards the latter half of the series, and bowled one or two excellent spells, which the stats don't quite reflect. Murali Karthik showed us what he is really capable of!

Suggestion: Draw inspiration from the Aussies by putting up the Gokulam Poster (pgs 40 - 41) in your room!

ABHINAV RAMNARAYAN

• **S. Jagadish, Chennai**

? What is bypass surgery?

! It is an operative treatment to save the lives of heart attack patients. Do you know what is heart attack? An artery called coronary artery supplies the blood to the heart muscles. A gradual deposition of fat in the walls of the artery causes narrowing of the artery and partial obstruction. As a consequence, the flow of the blood to the heart muscles is reduced. When a partially obstructed artery becomes totally obstructed, blood supply to the heart is completely cut-off. When the heart cells are deprived of blood supply, they undergo cell death causing severe chest pain. It is called heart attack. In a bypass surgery, the obstructions in the coronary artery are bypassed with the help of veins removed from the leg or an artery from the breast. Either a segment of saphenous vein from the leg or an internal mammary artery from the breast is removed. One end of it is connected to the aorta and the other end to the coronary artery beyond the site of blockage. Thus blood supply to a part of the heart, which previously had deficient blood supply, is improved. This surgery is medically called "coronary artery bypass grafting".

• **N. Venkatesh, Bangalore**

? How is short sight caused?

Are there any permanent remedies for curing it?

! Short sightedness means an inability to see an object at a distance. Vision is perfect for near vision but when the person tries to see distant objects he finds it difficult. In people who suffer from myopia (short sightedness) the image of the distant object is focussed in front of the retina. (A screen inside the eye to receive the image.) It is corrected with the help of a concave lens or minus lens in the form of spectacles or contact lens. They diverge more light rays so that the image is focussed on the retina. Today, Lasik laser is used to

GREENS- FULL OF VITAMINS

treat myopia. People need not wear glasses or contact lenses after getting laser treatment.

• **Rohit Mane, Mumbai**

? Do chewing gums like "Center Fresh" help to improve memory?

! Memory is the capacity of our brain to store information and retrieve it for later use. The memory process can be divided into four steps: learning, retention, forgetting and retrieval. The initial storage of information is called learning; keeping the new information is called retention; the loss of new information over a period of time is called forgetting and utilization of stored information is called retrieval. Memory is stored in our brain as memory trace. The only effective way to improve your memory is to read the lessons many times. Reflect immediately on what you have read. Recall them the next day. Review them with your friends, teachers or parents. These four "R"s (Read, Reflect, Recall and Review) would certainly improve your memory. Chewing gums like "Center Fresh" will not help in any way to improve your memory.

• **V. Saadhana, Chennai**

? Grandma says "drumstick leaves contain a lot of iron." Is it true, doctor? What role do the greens play in well-being?

! Yes, it is correct. Drumstick leaves contain a lot of iron, phosphorous, vitamin-A, C, and B-complex. All greens usually contain a variety of vitamins and minerals. Vitamins and minerals are essential nutrients and must be supplied through diet, since they are not made in the body. They act as catalysts in the processing of other nutrients (protein, fat and carbohydrates), help form red blood cells, enzymes, and hormones, regulate nerve function, maintain vision and create genetic materials. Minerals help in the formation and growth of bones and teeth, maintenance of blood clotting and functions of kidney, heart and thyroid. A prolonged shortage of any of the vitamins or minerals can lead to a deficiency disease like night blindness, beriberi, scurvy, rickets, anaemia, hypothyroidism etc..

Dr. G. GANESAN

INTERNATIONAL ROBBERY

The door bell rang.

Inspector Mary had some good news and bad news for them.

Now read on...

Inspector Mary said "The good news is, Mike, your father has been released.

The whole gang has been caught. It is an international gang. They have been operating all over the world! Asha, it seems your diamond tiara is a priceless antique. As soon as they heard your granny mention it on the phone, they swung into action. They had planned to kidnap Mike's father earlier. Stealing the tiara was an added bonus to them."

"Asha was befriended by Swapna. Through her, the gang came to know that you children are alone at home. They followed you with intelligent planning. All three of you escaped from them at the Museum. They had plans to kidnap Asha, to make sure they got the jewellery."

Asha said " I should thank Mike for saving my life that day"

Inspector Mary continued: "As soon as the gang was nabbed, the Indian police force worked very hard to gather information. This gang has been stealing priceless antiques from all over the world and selling it to private collectors. They had planned to steal bronze idols, temple jewellery and unique artefacts from the museums all over India. Asha's tiara was the first

KANTHALAKSHMI CHANDRAMOULI

target."

The children were shocked but happy that they had helped to catch such a big gang! "The Indian Government has announced a Bravery Award for the three of you. This is for saving the priceless treasures from being robbed. Scotland Yard is going to honour you too, for helping them to catch such a big international gang!"

Asha, Anil and Mike were thrilled.

Asha said "Wow! I don't believe it."

Anil said "Didn't I say that I always liked Bond - James Bond?" Mike laughed, "James Bond - was a spy,

has been admitted to a hospital. Here are your tickets. You must leave today." Inspector Mary, Asha and Anil consoled Mike

"Children, a very strict warning to all three of you. Never touch a gun again. It is very dangerous."

"Yes, we understand. We will never do that again," they promised.

but you are only a sleuth!"

"Children, I haven't finished yet! All three of you will have to go to London to receive the Award. The British Government is arranging for your tickets and stay."

"Hurray!" Anil and Asha jumped with joy

"President, Dr. Abdul Kalam will be presenting the Indian Government award to you". Inspector Mary gave the third good news.

"Oh! Dr. Kalam! He is my hero. Can we talk to him?" Asha asked eagerly.

"Yes, you can spend an hour with him, is that enough?" Inspector teased.

"We have to inform our parents" Asha was eager to talk to her parents.

"Don't worry. Your parents would have heard the news on BBC by now!" Inspector said.

"Mike, I have some bad news for you. After the ordeal with the kidnappers, your father is unwell and

After the first phone call from their parents, the phone rang continuously. Their friends, well wishers, relatives, T.V. channels and newspapers from all over the world congratulated them. "You three sleuths have become very famous" said Inspector Mary and patted them.

Asha and Anil's parents came back to Chennai. Granny was better and had sent them lots of gifts.

Mike called from London, "My father is much better now. We are waiting for you guys to come to London."

Soon Asha and Anil left for London.

Their mother said, "Be careful with strangers!"

Anil replied "I am sure Asha has learnt her lesson."

Aunt Sunitha and Mike welcomed them warmly at the Heathrow airport

in London. They then went to see Uncle Thomas at the hospital.

Uncle Thomas said "Congrats children! I must thank you for saving my life."

There was a representative from Scotland Yard who said "My name is Inspector Holmes. Welcome to England."

Asha asked breathlessly, "Oh! are you Sherlock Holmes by any chance?"

"No, young lady. Unfortunately my name is Edward Holmes!" Inspector smiled.

As promised, Mike took them to every tourist spot in London. The award ceremony was telecast live all over the world.

The BBC interviewer asked, "If you were given a citizenship in England, will you come?"

Anil said "No sir, we love India and we will complete our education there."

Asha said "We want to thank the British Government for the award and the hospitality. We are proud to be Indians. We will travel all over the world, but our home will be India."

They bade farewell to Mike and his parents.

They came back to India, to a hero's welcome. Their adventure was flashed in the media. They went to Delhi and enjoyed their stay there. They received the award from the President of India at Rashtrapathi Bhavan. They had tea with him. He enquired about their education, their adventure and their future plans. He advised them and in the end said, "Children, dream for yourselves and for your country. Then develop wings of fire and make India the best country in the world."

Asha said "Sir, I have a request. We would like to sell the jewellery given by my granny. Out of that money we want to start a Trust to help educate poor children.

Dr. Kalam was surprised and delighted. He said "Wonderful idea! First you'll have to get your granny's and parents' permission!"

"Yes sir. They have readily agreed. Our granny was very proud of us."

"Good! You must be proud of your family" The President said.

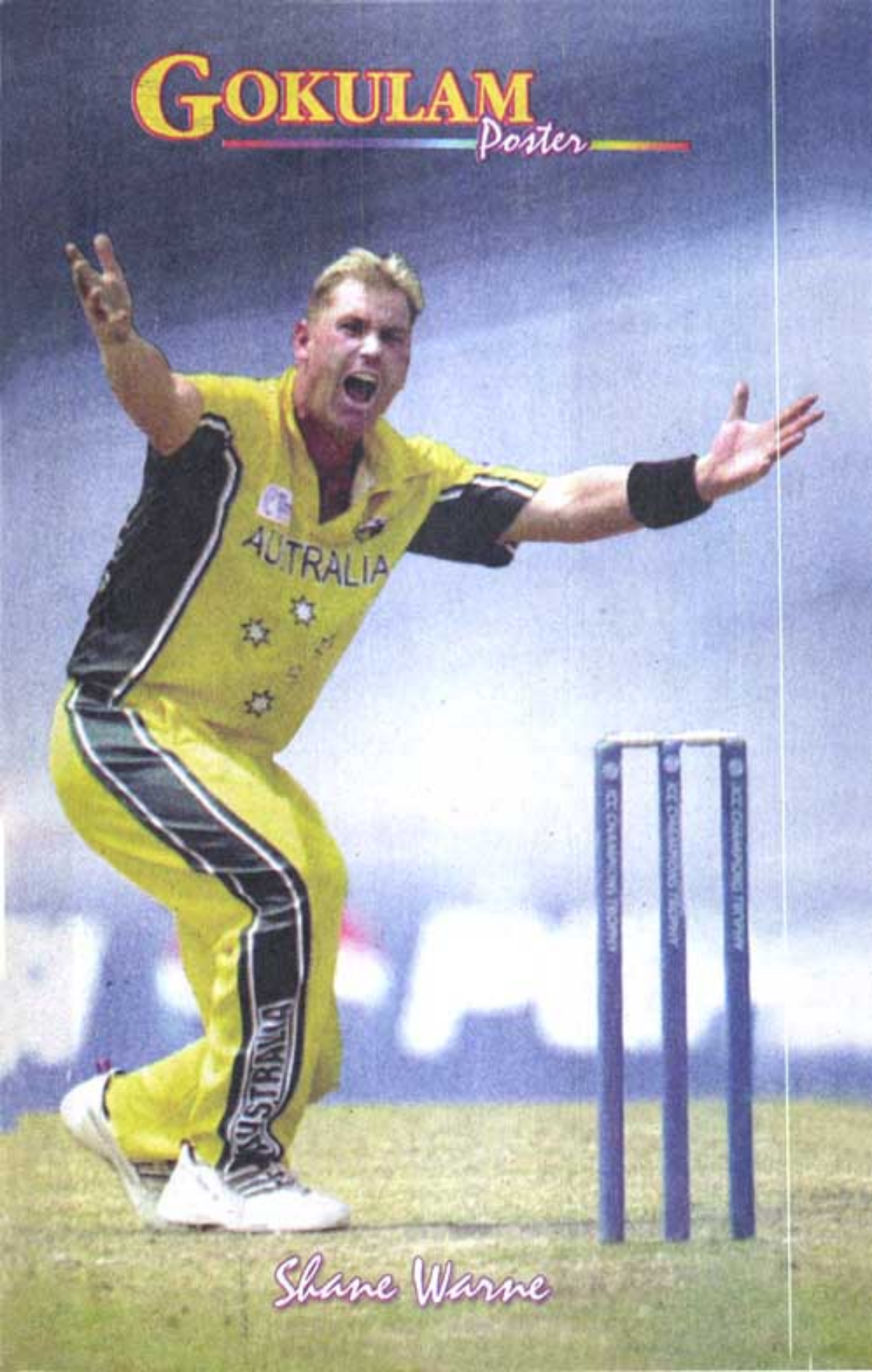
Mike called from London and said "Well, now that we have become International sleuths, when's the next adventure?"

Asha said "Thanks! but no thanks! I want to study well and get good marks this year!"

Anil laughed happily.

(Concluded)

GOKULAM Poster



Shane Warne

Adam Gilchrist
FILA

SCARY MEMORIES!

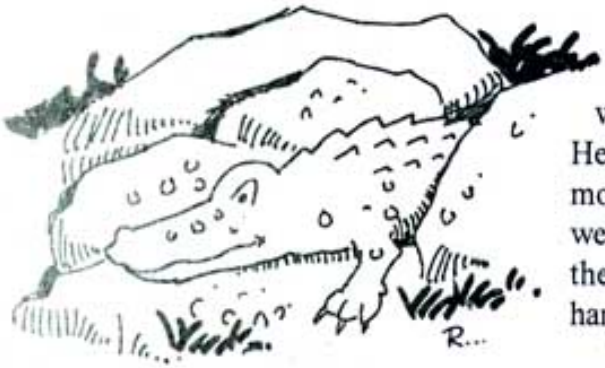
WATCH OUT FOR CROCS!

My dad, mom, uncle and I went to visit my aunt who lives in Mysore. We also visited Ranganathitu Bird Sanctuary nearby.

When we went to get tickets for a boat ride, I stepped on some bird droppings. My father asked me to wash my feet in the river. My uncle warned me to watch out for crocodiles. I did not take him seriously.

After we got back to Chennai, I visited my cousin who had also been to the Ranganathitu Sanctuary. She showed me some snaps she had taken at Ranganathitu.

She showed me a photograph of a rock and I asked her what was special



about the rock. She pointed to a crocodile camaflouged by the rock. Imagine my shock when I realised that it was the same rock as the one I had stood on to wash my feet! To think I could have been eaten up by a crocodile!

- C. Jayalakshmi,
Std VII,
DAV Sr. Sec School, Chennai

MIRACULOUS ESCAPE

This incident took place on my birthday last year. We had planned to visit some temples in Mumbai. My father had to deliver some important papers to a friend of his enroute. He parked the car on a sloping lane near his friend's place.

We waited in the car while he walked across to drop off the papers. He had left the keys behind since my mom, grandparents, my brother and I were in the car. My brother who was in the front seat playfully shifted the handbrake.

The car started sliding backwards, down the slope, while we screamed in panic. Some autorickshaw drivers nearby rushed to our rescue and controlled the car. By the time my dad came back, the situation was under control by their timely action and presence of

mind! We thanked the auto drivers for saving our lives.

- Sudha Sundaram,
Age 12, Thakur Public School,
Mumbai

FRIENDLY MONKEY

We visited the hill temple at Palani recently. There were plenty of monkeys and they posed a major threat to the pilgrims. They snatched food packs, water bottles and offerings carried by the pilgrims. However, it was great fun watching their pranks.

After our 'darshan' of Lord Muruga, we ate the prasadam: sweetened rice (Chakkara Pongal). I then went to wash my hands at the taps. A baby monkey was sitting on the fence nearby and threatened to come near me. My mother called out to me asking me to come back quickly.

Everytime I took some water in my hand, the monkey tried to come close to my hand. I guessed it was thirsty. I took some water in my hand and offered it to the monkey, bravely. The monkey warily sipped the water from my palm when it was sure I would not harm it. I filled more water in my cupped palms and the little monkey held onto my palms and gleefully sipped it. My father offered it a mug of water which it held onto and drank. By then there were many spectators. I was their hero!

After the monkey had had its fill, it raised its head, looked at me as if to say, 'thanks' and scampered away. I felt sad. I wondered who would give these monkeys water everyday. But I would like to tell you what I learnt from this incident - "Animals will not harm you, if you don't harm them."

- V. Aditya, Std V,
SSNKM Sharada Mandir School,
Mattanchery, Kerala

TRUE GIFTS FOR BABY JESUS

"This year we'll definitely win both the contests," said Rachel confidently to her sister, Alice, She was talking about the 'Best X'mas Tree Decoration' and 'Best Gift for Baby Jesus' contests organised by their church during Christmas every year.

Rachel and Alice had put away some money all through the year so that they could buy the expensive miniature crystal cradle as a gift for Baby Jesus and decorations for their tree.

"Rachel! Alice! Please go over to the English Bakery and get the cakes that we've ordered," Mom requested.

"Sure, mom. We'll then go and buy the cradle and the other decorations," chorused the sisters.

At the bakery, Rachel noticed a poorly dressed little girl looking longingly at the delectable cakes on display. "Ma! I want this one," said the girl pointing to a lovely Santa Claus cake.

"How much does this cake cost?" Her mom asked Mrs. Benson, the bakery owner, rather reluctantly.

Mrs. Benson ignored her and went about packing the cakes for Rachel, all the while chatting with the well dressed customers. Mrs. Benson did not usually entertain customers whom she thought could not afford the goodies. When the girl's mother asked again, she replied curtly, "hundred rupees."

The lady made a pretence of opening her purse, sighed sadly, and whispered to her daughter, "we'll buy it tomorrow, let's go."

The little girl's eyes brimmed with

tears. She knew tomorrow would never come.

Rachel was moved by the incident. She handed over a hundred rupee note to Mrs. Benson and asked her to give the cake to the little girl who was just leaving the shop.

R.ANJOO SHARON

Rachel left the bakery on her moped. She gazed at the display windows of the dress shops. "Look out," yelled Alice all of a sudden. Rachel applied the brakes, but hit a young beggar girl. Nobody blamed Rachel. They shouted at the poor girl for begging at the traffic signal!

Rachel handed over the keys to Alice and asked her to go home. She then escorted the poor, bruised girl, in an autorickshaw, to St.Agnes Hospital despite Alice's protests.

At the hospital, the nun who examined the girl said she was only slightly bruised and nothing was wrong with her. Relieved, Rachel asked the girl where her home was. She had no home. Her parents were dead and she lived on the pavement with ten other children, she replied.

Rachel and the nun felt sorry for her. The nun arranged for the girl and her friends to be admitted to the orphanage run by them. Rachel insisted on paying, but the nun refused firmly. Rachel then withdrew her Post Office Savings and donated the money to the orphanage.

Alice was dismayed. "Why did you give away all the money. How will we decorate our tree?" She barked angrily.

"We have our old decorations. We'll make some 'Thank you Cards' and place them on the tree. Cheer up, Alice", said Rachel enthusiastically.

Alice grimly left for her room.

In the evening, Rachel went around distributing cakes to the neighbours. She even visited Susan, her classmate, whom she disliked and was not on talking terms with. Susan's Xmas tree in the drawing room was a beauty.

"Susan has been decorating it for the past two days," said Susan's mom.

"Ma! I need more decorations," Susan demanded, of her mother, ignoring Rachel.

"Sorry! I am not giving you any more money," said her mother sternly.

"Please, Ma! The judges will be here in an hour," begged Susan.

Rachel took off her X'mas tree decorations. "I'll give them to Susan," she told a horrified Alice. "Anyway we don't stand a chance of winning. Susan can cover the tree with these and then she will surely win. Hers is the largest X'mas tree anyway."

The Pastor announced the results on Christmas day. The prize for the best tree went to Susan. The prize-winner for the "Best Gift to Baby Jesus" was Ronald. He had placed a beautiful miniature crystal cradle in front of the crib of Baby Jesus.

"We could've won if only we'd bought the cradle," Alice cried.

After X'mas mass granny visited them. "Rachel you've given the most wonderful gifts for Baby Jesus," she said.

"Oh, no! I didn't offer anything to Baby Jesus" said Rachel, sadly

"Kindness, charity, forgiveness and love are the only true gifts for Baby Jesus. Mrs. Benson at the bakery, Susan's mother and Sister Annie at the orphanage told me about your generosity. I'm a volunteer at St. Agnes' Orphanage and my heart was brimming with happiness when I saw the demand draft you had given. Your gift is more precious than the crystal cradle. God bless you, my child" said Granny. "I'm so proud of you."

"We are all proud of you, Rachel," chorused the whole family.

SCHOLARS' HOWLERS!

Teacher: Where is the English Channel?
Satish: I don't know, miss! Our T.V. picks up only the local channels!

- Nitin Venkatesh Kulkarni, Std IX, Dombivili (W)

Teacher: Raju, the first essay of yours is very neatly written, but I can't read your second essay...
Raju: Ma'am, that's because my mother's handwriting is better than my father's!

- Ankita Bhat, Std VII, Mumbai

Small boy: How much does an orange cost?
Orange seller: Three rupees.
Boy: Please give it for two rupees.
Seller: For two rupees, I can give you only the peel.
Boy: Okay. I'll pay one rupee give me the orange without the peel!

- Ananya Mishra, Std VII, Bhubaneswar.

Two students were fighting in class.
First Student: I'll break all 64 teeth!
Another student who witnessed the fight: But he has only 32 teeth...
First Student: I knew that you would interfere. So I added your teeth too!

- R. Gayathri Devi, Std VIII, Chennai

WONDER LIGHT!

SEETHA SRIKANTH

Laser, Laser everywhere!!

" I cannot believe that I am back home on the same day!" marvelled Raja's granny.

She had come from the village to have an eye operation in a big hospital. "When *my* mother had an operation, she was in the hospital for one week and she had to be helped with every thing! But now I can manage by myself in half a day. This young doctor must be very clever!" Grandma *was amazed.*

" *Amma*, the doctor was smart, but the LASER is much smarter!' said Raja's mother.

"What is this LASER?" Raja wondered. "R Arun from Villupuram and A. Anurag Reddy from Hyderabad also want to know about laser," he said, and his silicon dust friend Viz flashed the answer in his mind: "It is a kind of light".

"Viz, you can cut open the eye with a scalpel (a surgeon's knife). But how can you cut open with some light?" asked Raja.

"You can make a tiny hole in a delicate tissue or you can seal up a fibre or blood vessel with this light's energy."

"What is so special about this light?" asked Raja.

" This light is of one colour, a very steady stream and it is a tight and concentrated beam. The white light we see and use as you know is a mixture of colours and is diffused."

"Where does this light come from?"

"There are many types of lasing devices. But the basic theory is this: Every atom, as you know, has protons, neutrons and electrons. The electrons keep whizzing about around the centre of the atom. The electrons move at several levels. When they are given energy they move to a higher energy level. But these restless electrons try to come back to their usual orbits and to do this they try to give away some energy. When they give away energy it comes out as a photon or a light particle. A stream

of such light particles is a laser beam."

"What does LASER stand for?"

"It means Light Amplification by Stimulating Emission Radiation. The light emitted by the electrons is made bigger (amplified) by reflecting devices to make a strong beam."

"Viz, Hotel imperial has announced a "Laser Show" for Deepavali. What is that then?"

"Here the same kind of light in a different strength and colours is projected overhead to make wonderful patterns in the night sky" explained Viz.

"But I have never used a laser," said Raja wistfully.

"I am sure you have. In some shops, at the cash counter, they use a "bar code reader." The price of the item you buy is not written in numbers but as a series of thick and thin stripes. The cashier passes a small " reader" over these stripes and it gives a particular type of signal that is understood by the computer as numbers".

"But how can a light read some stripes and make them numbers!" asked Raja puzzled.

"The laser beam can be very sensitive. It can 'feel' the stripes and send out a signal of 0s and 1s, depending on how thick the stripes, as well as the white spaces in between are. This whole big series of 0s and 1s is easy for a computer to understand and it translates it into our kind of numbers. In the same way it reads the music written in Compact discs (CDs). It is used in industries to make accurate measurements and enable cutting, in offices for printers, in the military for missile building..."

"Okay! I understand. This is a wonderful light, indeed!"

Answer to the Viz Quiz 2:
Smiling takes less effort because only seventeen muscles are involved in smiling while it takes forty three to frown! Keep smiling!

TELLING A BUSINESS STORY!

Public Relations or PR as it is popularly known, is the business of business storytelling! Want to know more about this different world?

What do you think PR is?

- A profession that organizes events such as product launch parties and awards ceremonies?
- An industry that uses marketing, advertising, promotion and publicity to gain attention?
- A busy office job which consists of partnering with a wide group of people including clients, photographers, and journalists?
- A serious business function with a growing body of theoretical and practical knowledge?

The answer is: all of the above and more.

Public-relations executives are the guardians of an organization's reputation. They seek to build lasting relationships by establishing and maintaining mutual understanding and goodwill between an organization and the public.

All organizations need to communicate, be it between themselves or with their audience (the media, the Government, employees, shareholders, and any other external public or private body whose activities may affect an organization). Organizations have ideas and messages to pass on and do so through PR executives, who ensure that the information passed is honest and open. The PR department has to deal with each group separately, since information demands vary.

Why Practice PR?

To communicate effectively, an organization has to listen as well as talk. A dialogue should be established between the communicator and the audience. Of late, PR's role has gone beyond promoting awareness, gaining media exposure, and influencing behavior. Public-relations executives perform the strategic management function of supervising and directing an organization's brand, reputation, and corporate image.

Are You a PR Person? Do You have it in You?

As with any other job, confidence and know-how are acquired through time and practice. The basic requirements to become a PR executive, however, are:

- Strong communication skills (preferably in English) - both written and spoken
- Good project-management skills - the ability to carry out different tasks simultaneously and work within allocated budgets and deadlines
- An inquiring and analytical mind -

executives need to have an ongoing interest in current affairs, especially in the socio-political and economic developments that affect business.

Where Would You Work?

There are two ways to work in PR: either as a consultant or in-house. While the public-relations consultancy firm is an agency providing advice and specialist services to clients, the in-house public relations department works exclusively for the organization.

Why pursue a career in PR?

Public-relations executives are often qualified in diverse disciplines and make use of the knowledge and skills they draw from these (such as business management, marketing, and psychology). Therefore, graduate or post-graduate courses in PR welcome students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds. A degree in PR is not necessary, though the industry is beginning to realize the value of PR graduates.

The many industry sectors of public relations mean that specialist knowledge is sometimes required. Therefore, while a graduate of biochemistry or microbiology can work as a part of the healthcare sector, a student of computer science can work in PR for the Information Technology sector.

PR Prospects

A highly competitive field, PR is increasingly becoming a popular career choice for many graduates.

It is essential to have a good first degree. There is also an increasing emphasis on gaining professional qualifications in PR. The Annamalai University, the Indian Institute of Public Relations (New Delhi), the Mudra Institute of Mass Communication, the Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, St. Xavier's College of Communications (Mumbai), and the Symbiosis Institute of

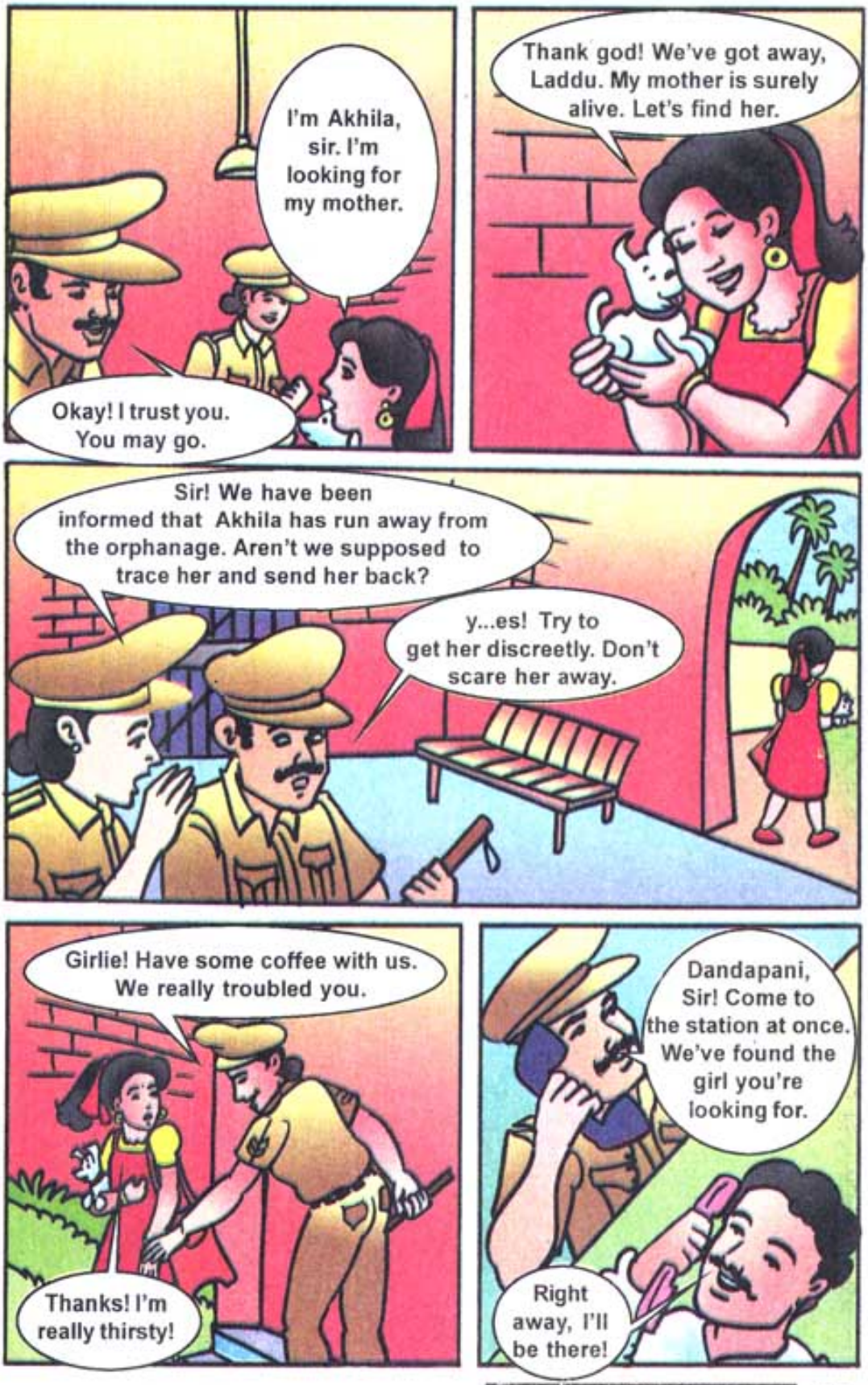
Journalism & Communication (Mumbai), are some of the institutes that offer degrees in PR.

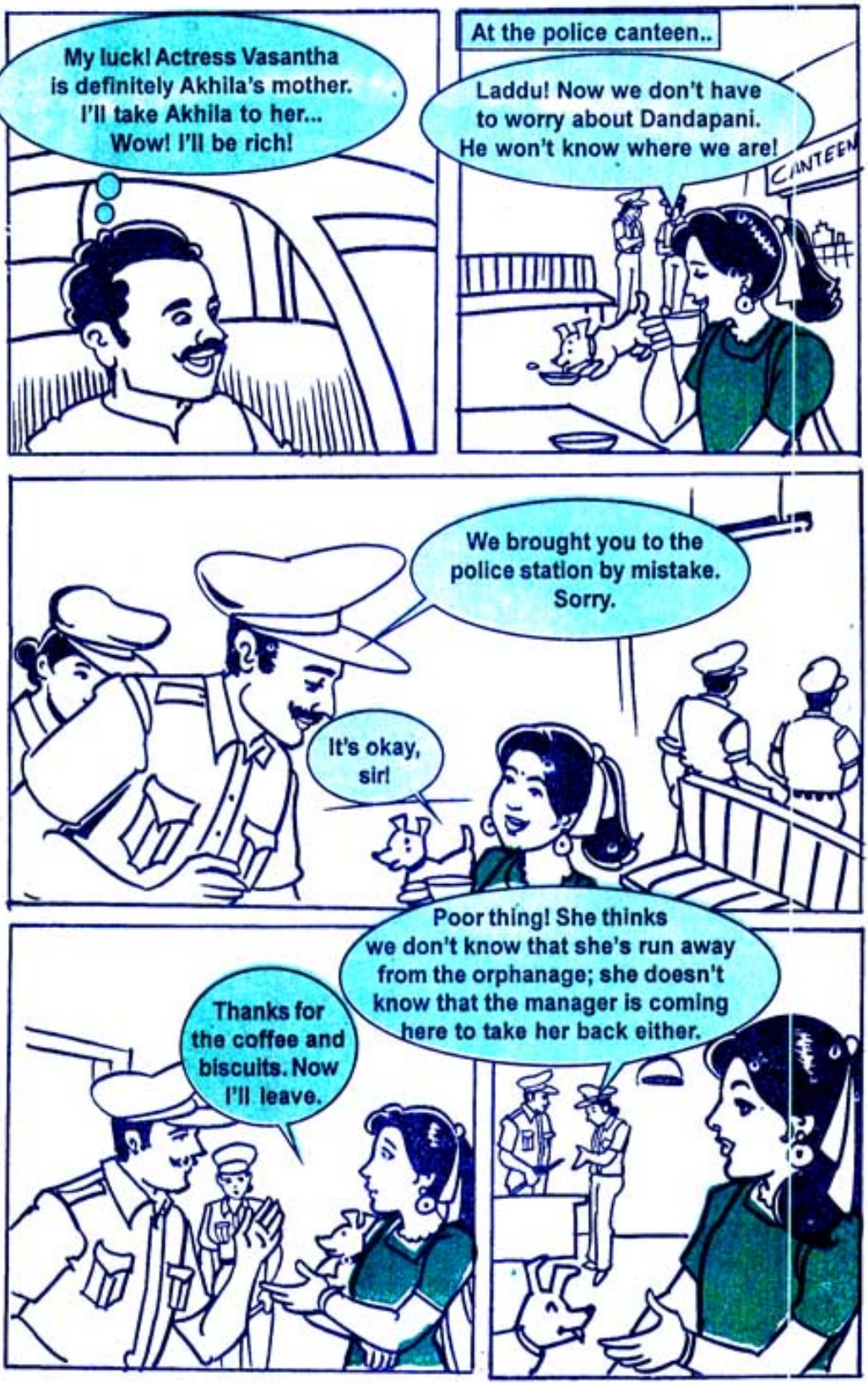
If you think you have what it takes to become a PR executive, and if you're interested in this field, you may manage to achieve the fairy-tale ending—*and they lived happily ever after!*

NEXT MONTH
TECHNICAL WRITING
Feedback to
gokulam@careersindia.com

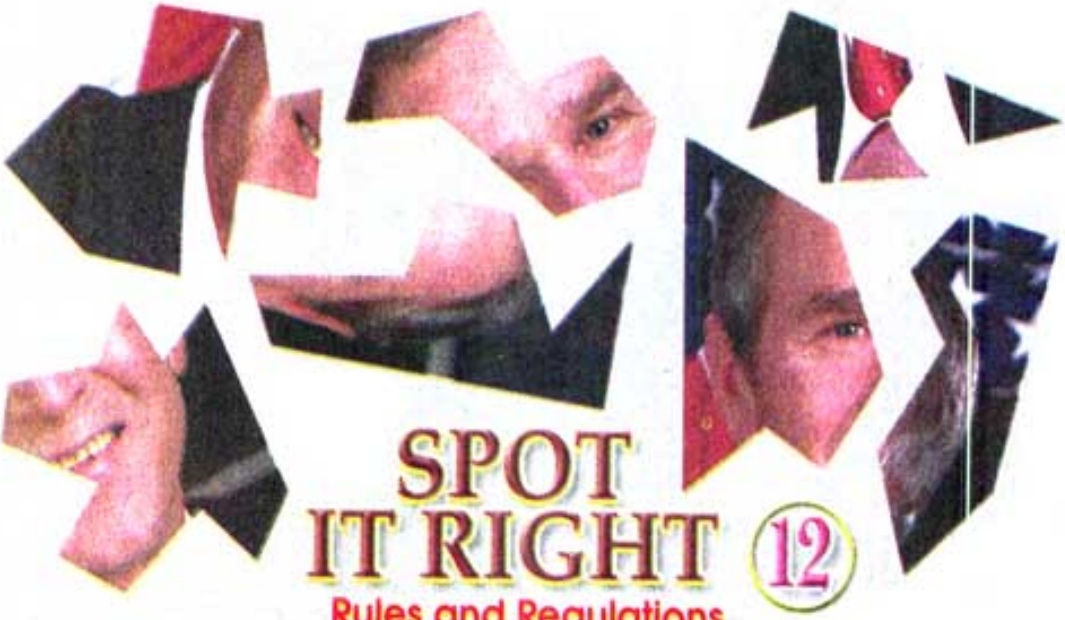
MOM, DEAR MOM!

STORY: VANDU MAMA
PIC: MAHESH


I'm Akhila, sir. I'm looking for my mother.
Okay! I trust you. You may go.
Thank god! We've got away, Laddu. My mother is surely alive. Let's find her.
Sir! We have been informed that Akhila has run away from the orphanage. Aren't we supposed to trace her and send her back?
y...es! Try to get her discreetly. Don't scare her away.
Girlie! Have some coffee with us. We really troubled you.
Thanks! I'm really thirsty!
Dandapani, Sir! Come to the station at once. We've found the girl you're looking for.
Right away, I'll be there!


My luck! Actress Vasantha is definitely Akhila's mother. I'll take Akhila to her... Wow! I'll be rich!
At the police canteen..
Laddu! Now we don't have to worry about Dandapani. He won't know where we are!
CANTEEN
We brought you to the police station by mistake. Sorry.
It's okay, sir!
Poor thing! She thinks we don't know that she's run away from the orphanage; she doesn't know that the manager is coming here to take her back either.
Thanks for the coffee and biscuits. Now I'll leave.

So sad! We can't be bothered about the feelings of orphans. We are only doing our duty. We can't let her escape.
At that time, in the police station...
Gopal! the man from the orphange is here. Bring the girl.
Sorry dear! A man called Dandapani is waiting for you at the office.
Wha...t..?
Akhila was shocked.
Dandapani... here? I'm dead! He'll imprison me in the orphanage again! I can't find my mom!
All my hopes... gone! They'll say running away was a crime! Since the lady in the photo looked like me, I assumed she was my mom...
To be continued



SPOT IT RIGHT 12

Rules and Regulations

• Strictly for school going children • Five lucky winners will get a cash award of Rs.50/- each. They will be decided by a draw of lots from out of the all correct entries. • Entries with completed picture and answer accepted on this form only • No xerox copies.

Last Date : 14.12.2004

Assemble the seven scrambled jigsaw pieces to complete the picture and write the answer.

Hint : RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT

ANSWER : _____

*Local address is a must for overseas entries.

Name : (Mr/Ms) .....

Age : ..... Class .....

School : .....

*Residential Address : .....

.....

.....Pin .....

Signature : .....

Space for completed picture

The Editor, Gokulam, Kalki Buildings,
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GOKULAM

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FESTIVE SEASON!

WINTER VACATION

The winter vacations have come!
We promise not to be troublesome
With the end of the exams
We'll look forward to joyful programmes!

All through the month, everyday
We'd like to go out and play.
We'll all run out
To scream and shout.

CHRISTMAS

Yipee! Here's fun filled Christmas!
The time of the year. when kids
don't make any fuss
Be it singing carols or Santa
dancing,
Gaily dressed children are always
prancing

Come let's dance and sing,
And snow, at each other fling
Have fun, coz you have a reason
For now it's the Christmas season!

- Reyome Roy
Std IX, AECS - 1,
Mumbai

We'll go camping in the wood
And carry lots of sumptuous food
During Christmas, we'll make merry
Or leisurely watch, Tom & Jerry!

- Nisha Nandakumar,
Std IX,
- K.V.Ashok Nagar, Chennai

GOD'S GIFT

Oh! Nature's so beautiful
So wonderful and so bright!
I gaze to the full
At such a beautiful sight!
Sweet flowers and huge trees
All look very nice to me
Birds flitting and singing free
Really very cute to see.
When you have a worry
E'en if you're in a hurry
Admire god's gift of nature
Your heart's sure to be filled with pleasure!

- Prerna Parameswaran,
Std V, Vivek Vidyalaya,
Mumbai

WHEN BIRBAL

Once a rich man came to Birbal. He said, "Sir, there has been a robbery in my house. Some precious jewels are missing, please help!"

Birbal agreed and told the man that he would come to his house the next day.

The next day, Birbal reached the man's house and told the rich man very confidently that he would nab the thief. Birbal asked the man to summon all his servants and housekeepers. The man did so.

Birbal then said, "I am giving each of you a stick which measures 6 inches. Whoever has stolen the goods, his stick will grow longer in size by 2 inches." So saying, he gave each of them a 6 inch stick.

Meanwhile, the thief, who was the gardener, after receiving the stick was worried as well as doubtful. He thought, "Is Birbal trying to fool us?" But he still had a lingering fear.

He decided to play it safe. He broke a twig from a plant, the same size as the stick and kept them together. He thought if the 'magic' stick really did lengthen, he would take the other stick and if it didn't, well and good. The next morning when the gardener got up, he saw that both the sticks were just the same. He smiled slyly and went about his work.

When Birbal came to the rich man's house again he told him "Summon your servants

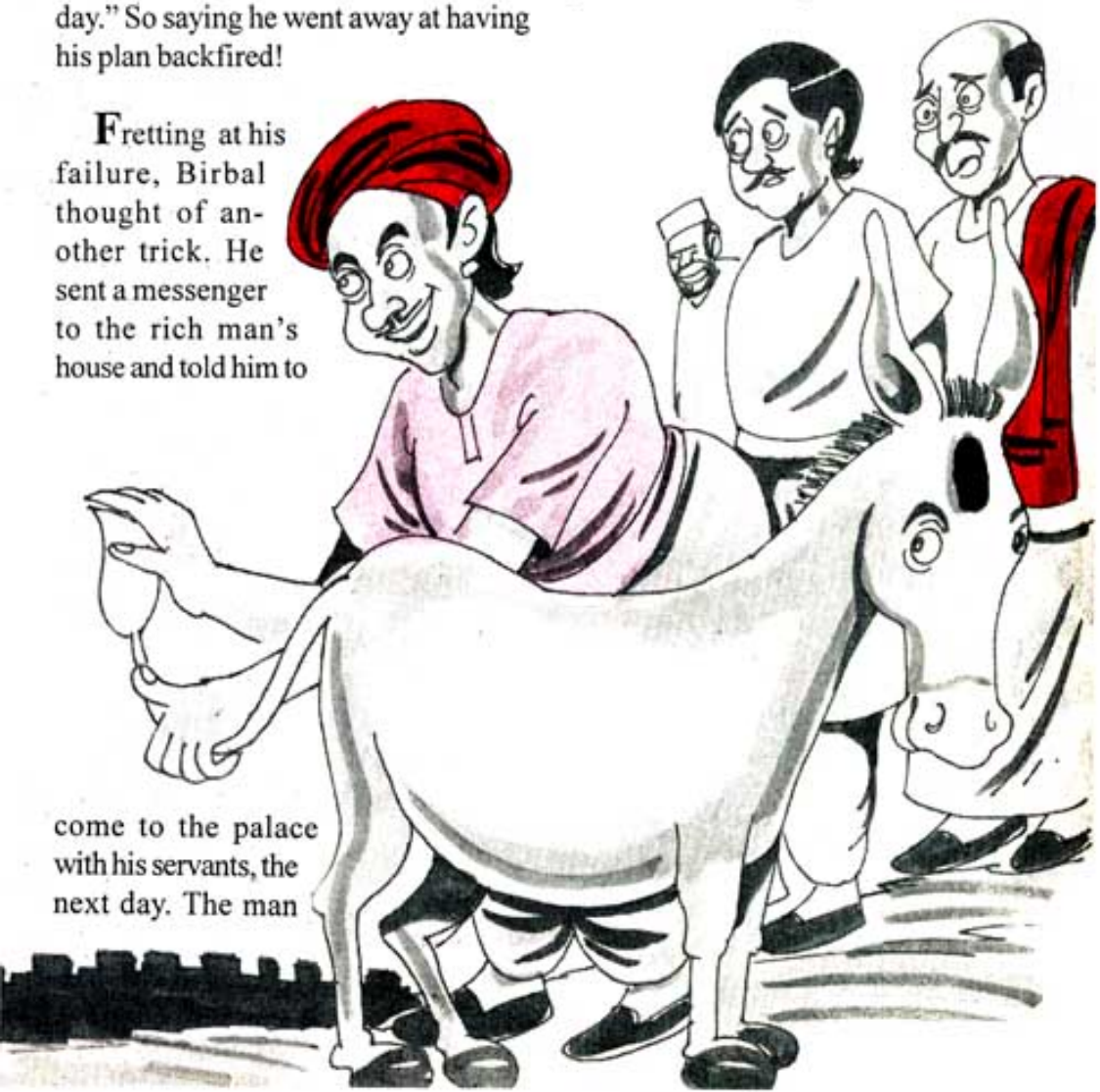
with their sticks. Time to nab the thief". The servants came with their sticks. So did the gardener. Birbal then inspected the sticks hoping to find a short one.

WAS OUTWITTED!

He was stupified when he found none!

He squirmed and said, "uh... the thief is... humph... uh... I need one more day." So saying he went away at having his plan backfired!

Fretting at his failure, Birbal thought of another trick. He sent a messenger to the rich man's house and told him to come to the palace with his servants, the next day. The man did so. EmperorAkbar, and his courtiers were there in the palace to witness the proceedings. Then Birbal came and announced "I want all the servants to pass through that courtyard on my left. I have my magic donkey there. I want you all to pull its tail. Whoever is the thief, his hand will get stuck to the tail" What Birbal had done was, he had put some wet black paint on the donkey's tail. If the thief



was doubtful, he would not touch the tail but will pretend that he had pulled it. Thus, the person with a clean hand would be the thief.

The gardener was doubtful. When it was his turn, he hesitated before pulling the donkey's tail. Then he saw a black tilak on the donkey's head. It was the dhobi's (washerman's) donkey! The dhobi marked his donkey with a tilak (spot on the forehead) in case he got confused when it was with a herd. The gardener now felt confident and pulled the tail knowing that the donkey was not magical.

On the other hand, now Birbal was practically sweating. Every man who came out of the room had traces of black paint in his hand!

To make the situation worse, Emperor Akbar asked him, "well Birbal who is the thief?"

Birbal stumbled and fumbled and mumbled "Ah... I need a...um"

Just then the gardener moved forth and spoke out "Your majesty, I would like to tell Birbal not to try any more because I am confessing. Yes , I stole the jewels but I was clever enough to escape from being caught even though Birbal tried his best. I am ready to face any punishment and am ready to give back the jewels for I have the satisfaction of outwitting Birbal!"

Birbal shifted uncomfortably 'How insulting!' he thought.

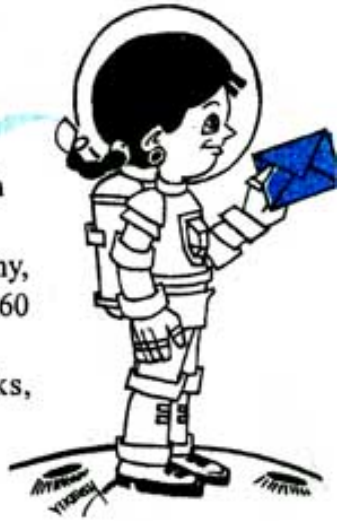
Emperor Akbar then spoke "Even though you have committed a crime, I pardon you for your truthfulness and your cleverness. A man who can outwit my Birbal should be really a clever man! I thus appoint you in place of Birbal and he shall now be your assistant!

The gardener and the rich man saluted the king. The courtiers laughed with glee, and poor Birbal! He got so stumped he fainted and did not get up for a week!

(Don't worry! This is just a fictitious tale.)

- Bibin V. Babu, Std X,
Meghamala Roy Education Centre
Kolkata

PENPALS



Name: **Jehanger Ahmad Channa**
Age: 17
Address: Aram Pora, (Azad Gunj), Baramulla - 193101 J&K
Hobbies: Reading, playing cricket and badminton, writing poems, listening to western music and surfing the net.

Name: **R. Kaushik**
Age: 10
Address: 614, Jegannathan Street, Theni, Tamil Nadu.
Hobbies: Reading books, playing cricket and chess and listening to music.

Name: **Rishi K. Roy**
Age: 16
Address: C/o. Principal of Darlong School, P.O. Seijosa Dist. E. Kameng, Pin 790 103 Arunachal Pradesh
Hobbies: Playing Volleyball and cricket, chatting with friends, swimming and reading books.

Name: **Priya R. Prakash**
Age: 14
Address: 57/5 J.R. Colony, N. Thippasandra, Bangalore 560 075.
Hobbies: Reading books, drawing and painting, listening to music, watching T.V and playing.

Name: **Himanshi Sahu**
Age: 13
Address: Qtr No. C/5 HTPS Colony, Korba (West) Chattisgarh.
Hobbies: Reading Gokulam and books, craftwork, playing computer games, doing science experiments.

Name: **Ramya K**
Age: 10
Address: E 18/4 DRDO Township, CV Raman Nagar, Bangalore 560 093
Hobbies: Playing, reading books, watching T.V, drawing and painting and making friends.

Pally Exchanges

Name: **J. Infanta Sajeena**
Age: 13
Address: 124, V.E. Road, Tuticorin - 2, Tamil Nadu
Hobbies: Reading comics, watching T.V, playing computer games, listening to music.

Name: **Ankita Isor**
Age: 10

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Dear Readers,

* You are most welcome to send in your contributions to **Gokulam** either by post or by e-mail.

Remember every contribution sent by you should give details of your **- Name, Age, Class, Name and address of school, Residential address and a declaration stating that the contribution is your original creation (if not, the source must be mentioned).**

However, we cannot guarantee that your contribution will be published. It is also not possible for us to tell you when it will be published. But, if you require your contribution to be sent back to you on rejection, then you must enclose a self addressed, stamped envelope.

- Editor

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You will receive a **participation certificate** from us if your contribution is published. At the end of the one year period ending June 2005, the person with most number of participation certificates will receive a special prize.

Address: NB - 2 - 11, ONGC Colony, Panvel - 410 221, Maharashtra.

Hobbies: Reading, singing, dancing, cycling and collecting stamps.

Name: **K. Priya Durga**

Age: 13

Address: New No.139 (Old No. 62), A.K. Samy Nagar III Street, Kilpauk, Chennai 600 010

Hobbies: Reading Gokulam and books, playing, making friends and listening to radio.

Name: **Namrata Khosla**

Age:15

Address: Post Box 35, Duliajan 786602 Assam

Hobbies: Writing poems, listening to western and Indo Pop music, travelling, reading novels, enjoying nature.

Name: **S. Gopinath**

Age:12

Address: 259, Adinath Society, VIP Road, Vadodara 390 022.

Hobbies: Reading books, playing cricket and cards, collecting coins, watching T.V, cycling and listening to music.

READING MAKETH A FULL MAN

RADHA PADMANABHAN

Dear Children,

Looking at the questions that you have asked me about the meanings of words makes me want to tell you once again how important reading is, especially to get to know what words mean. Your parents may be happy if you read only your text books and get good marks in your examinations. But this won't do. Read anything that comes your way including Gokulam and your English will improve in a way that learning grammar alone will not. "Reading maketh a full man" - Bacon. "Reading is to the mind, what exercise is to the body" - Sir Richard Steel.

As you study further you will find that only reading books helps. And now let me get down to answering your questions.

What is the difference between murmur and whisper? And also crime, vice and sin? - Himanshi Sahu, Korba, Chattisgarh.

Murmur : A murmur is a low, indistinct and continuous sound like the sounds of lakes and waves.

Whisper: You say something quietly with your breath so that other people cannot hear what you are saying.

Crime is an illegal action which can be punished by law.

Vice is a moral fault in someone's character or a habit which is regarded as a weakness.

Sin is an action which breaks the law of God and therefore an act against moral principles.

What is the difference in the meanings of the words insurance and assurance? - Harshvardhan Singh Rajawat, Nagpur.

Insurance: You pay a fixed amount of money each year to a company as a means of protection. For example your health, car, life etc. Medical insurance will take care of

your medical bills if you are hospitalised and car insurance will take care of your car and any expenses if you are involved in an accident.

Assurance - If you give someone an assurance that something is true, you make him feel less worried. You give him a feeling of confidence.

What is the difference between the use of the words arise and rise and awake and wake? - S. Bharat Kumar, Thakkolam.

Rise: If something rises it moves upwards—hot air, the sun from the east. You rise from your chair. Buildings being built, rise. Sound rises when it is higher in pitch.

Arise: When something arises it begins to exist or comes to your attention. An old fashioned use of arise is to "arise from your chair" or "arise"

to greet a person.

Awake: Means not sleeping e.g. I lay awake all night. In sentences like "I awoke from deep sleep" it may be a literary usage.

Wake: When you wake or someone wakes you, you become conscious after

sleep. The word wake has other meanings also but I won't go into that.

How do we abbreviate example as Eg.? There is no G in the word! - J.Manoj Kumar, Chennai.

The letters eg stand for the Latin phrase, exempli gratia, which means for example. A list of examples may be preceeded by eg.

What is the difference between Approximate and Appropriate? - K.R.Nithyapriya, K.V. Meenambakam, Chennai

Approximate means close to the correct time, number, position, etc. For example, there are approximately 800 students in this school.

Appropriate means correct, suitable or acceptable. For example, it seemed appropriate to thank him for his hospitality. Appropriate can also mean taking something that does not belong to you.

World Poet

Vishwakavi (world poet) Rabindranath was born to Maharishi Devendranath Tagore and Sharada Devi on May 7, 1861. He was the fourteenth child in the family! His father was an aristocrat and engaged a private tutor to educate him at home. He started writing poetry as a child.

He pursued further studies at a public school at London.

His poem "Sandhya Geet" was appreciated by one and all, including Bankim Chandra Chatterji who penned the national song "Vande Mataram."

His father asked him to take charge of the zamindari at Kushtia (presently in Bangladesh). Rabindranath loved to listen to the songs of the boatmen and peasants. He also wanted to improve the living conditions of the peasants. Although he knew education was the solution to the problem, he believed that modern school and college education was not what they required.

His father offered him the land around Shantiniketan at Bolpur 112 Kms. north of Kolkata. He started an ashram type school there, so that children could enjoy the learning experience. Under the shade of trees, informal education (including music, drama etc.) was imparted. However not many people fancied the school and Rabindranath spent all his funds in maintaining the school at Shantiniketan.

He entered the nationalist movement, gave fiery speeches and composed several powerful lyrics. One of them "Amar Sonar Bangla" later became the National Anthem of Bangladesh! He composed "Jana Gana Mana" which was sung at the congress sessions and later became India's National Anthem.

Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in the year 1931 for "Geethanjali", a collection of poems. He was the first Indian, in fact the first Asian to be awarded the Nobel Prize and the British Government conferred knighthood on him. Rabindranath Tagore spent all the prize money on his school.

He was closely associated with Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru during the freedom struggle. In fact, Nehru's daughter Indira had her education at Shantiniketan.

Rabindranath Tagore's Shantiniketan and Vishwabharati University are world famous today. Tagore is called the father of modern Bengali literature. Although he passed away in 1941, he lives in the hearts and voices of millions of people who admire Rabindra Sangeet and his many musical plays.

- B. Sai Kumar, Std IX,
St.Joseph's H.S., Hyderabad

KRISHNA AND THE FRUIT

One day Krishna was playing in the courtyard with Balarama and others. He heard the voice of a woman in the street crying out, "Fruits! Jambu fruits! Jambu fruits!"

Immediately, Krishna wanted to buy some of them. But he had no money. His eager eyes noticed, however, a huge heap of grains nearby. He grabbed a fistful of them and ran onto the street. On the way most of the grains fell off.

He came to the fruitseller and holding out his hands said, "O dear lady, take these grains and give me fruits in exchange." The woman was mesmerised by the beauty and charm of the boy. The tinkling of the anklets on his feet was music to her ears. She would never forget it in her life.

She said, "O my child! You have come to purchase fruits in exchange of grains. All the grains have fallen down on the way, but still you may take whatever quantity of fruits you like."

So saying, she filled his small hands with as much of those fruits as he could hold, after collecting the few grains offered by him.

When the woman went home and looked into her basket she could not believe her eyes. All the grains had turned into jewels and gold. By performing this miracle, Krishna showed that anything offered to him with love and affec-

SELLER

tion returns to the devotee, increased a thousandfold in value.

Retold by Sruti Mukundan,
Std VIII,
D.A.V Public school,
Kolkata.

✉ Thank you for the quiz column on Chacha Nehru in response to Rashmika's (Nov.2004) request. I would like to correct Sneha (Diwali viewpoint). 'Avali' (and not vali) means rows. Wishing you Happy Christmas.

- Sudha Narayanan, Std XI, Dombivil (E)

✉ Thanks for featuring me in the Child Achiever column. I am to receive my award on 14th Nov. at Vigyan Bhavan, Delhi. You had missed out the name of my school. It is Maharishi Vidya Mandir.

- J.M. Aarthi Mangala, Std VII, Thanjavoor.

READERS' REQUESTS!

✉ I tried out 'Choco Poco' (Budding chef, Nov. issue). My cousins and I loved it. I also like Tech Talk and International Robbery (serial). I am a great fan of Christopher Reeve and that column was great! Could you give us a poster of his? I suggest you could start a column to wish our friends and relatives on their birthdays.

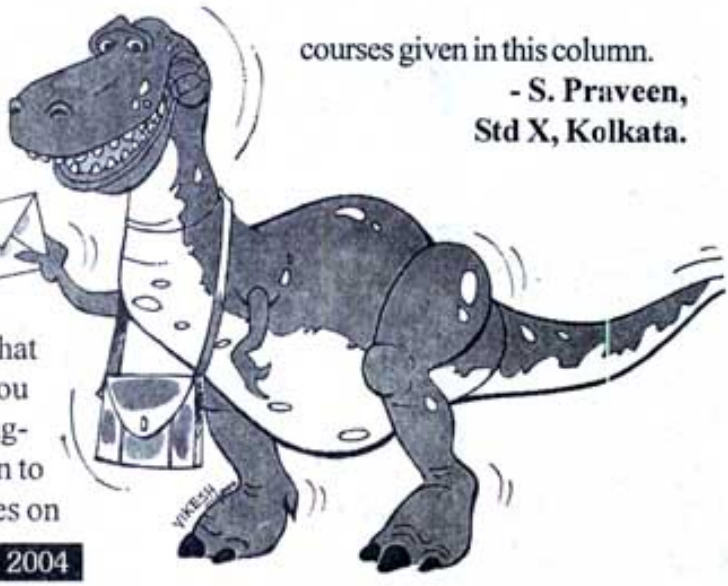
- Vivek. C. Vijayan, Std VIII, Bangalore

✉ My elder brother who is 17, and I enjoy reading Gokulam. We buy it from our local newspaper vendor. Could you start a column for 'Ghost Stories'? I'm sure many readers would enjoy such thrilling and scary stories.

- Darshana N. Dawda, Std VII, Dombivili (W)

✉ The Career Guidance column is very useful and informative. You could also indicate the approximate cost of the courses given in this column.

- S. Praveen, Std X, Kolkata.



✉ I am a regular reader of Gokulam and have sent several articles which have not been published. Why don't you start 'Star Rendezvous' Column again?

- B. Saikumar, Std IX, Hyderabad

✉ I am a great fan of HarryPotter and I thank you for reintroducing Potter Mania. The Jayabalan story was good. I think you should start publishing 'Undir' & 'Balu the Bully' stories again, at least in alternate issues.

- Yeshaswini Halbhore, Std XI, Bangalore

✉ I suggest gender should be mentioned in the Penpals Column. It will avoid unnecessary confusion.

- Ananya Mishra, Std VII, Bhubaneswar

✉ The interviews with Child Achievers are very interesting as also the other columns. I have been reading Gokulam for six years and like to do the 'activities' featured in the magazine.

- Nair Sreena Gopinathan, Ambarnath

✉ My English vocabulary has increased after I started reading Golkulam. I can now speak English fluently and confidently. May Gokulam last long!

- P. Rajiv, Age 17, Delhi

✉ I like the stories in Gokulam and enjoy solving puzzles. Gokulam is an excellent magazine.

- H. Anusha, Bellary

SOLUTION TO SPOT IT RIGHT - 11

LATA MANGESHKAR

CONGRATULATIONS!
The five lucky winners are:

Astha A. Shah,
Std VI, Carmel School, Dasmah, Kuwait

Soumyajit Mondal,
Std VII, K.V. II, Kalai Kunda, West Bengal

V. Jeffry Daniel,
Std V, Don Bosco, Nasik

Nitesh Gada, Std V,
Guru Nanak Public School, Bidar

Ankit Jotwani,
Std VI, St. Thomas Convent School, Bhopal.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas, as we all know is the birthday of Jesus Christ and is celebrated all over the world on December 25th.

FUN FEST!

Christmas is the time when people put so many lights outside their houses that you wonder whether they're celebrating Jesus's birth or General Electric's!

Have you wondered why Christmas is referred to as X'mas and not Y or Z'mas? In Greek, Christ is referred to as 'Khristos' and the first letter is 'X'. So Christ + Mass became X'mas! Call it Christmas or X'mas the most popular carol all of us hear, blaring from reversing cars to telephones, is of course, 'Jingle Bells!'

The world's most famous Christmas carol is the one commemorating His birth: SILENT NIGHT! Translated into 119 different languages from Joseph Mohr's German 'Stille Nacht', created 186 years ago (1818 - 2004) here is how it goes:

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round you virgin mother and Child
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace...

The carol ends with

Christ, the saviour is born!

Dashing through the snow,
In a one horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go,
Laughing all the way.
Bells on bobtails ring,
Making spirits bright,
What fun it is to ride and sing
A sleighing song tonight
Jingle bells, jingle bells,
Jingle all the way!
O what fun it is to ride
On a one horse open sleigh!

Yes! Santa and Christmas are inseparable!

The Dutch settlers in New Amsterdam (New York) brought Santa to America! Today, Finland is one of the few countries where kids can actually see Santa in the act of delivering presents and he really checks whether they were good or naughty!

CAROLS!

FUN FEST!
Christmas: The time of the year when everyone gets 'Santamental!'

Santa Claus a merry old man with red and white clothes, the American version of St. Nicholas, came from the Dutch version called "Sint Klaas."

FUN FEST!
Afraid of Santa? Maybe you're 'Claus'trophobic!

And how does Santa travel from his home in the North Pole? In his sleigh driven by reindeer, of course!

Well, originally, there were eight flying reindeer, but they were later joined by Rudolph. Heard that carol?

Rudolph, the red nosed reindeer
Had a very shiny nose

And, if you ever saw him,
You would even say it glows!

All of the other reindeer
Used to laugh and call him names
They never let poor Rudolph
Join in any reindeer games

Then one foggy Christmas eve
Santa came to say,
"Rudolph with your nose so bright,
Won't you guide my sleigh
tonight?"

Then how the reindeer loved him
As they shouted out with glee
"Rudolph the red nosed reindeer
You'll go down in history!"

FUN FEST!

Father to tiny tot: No! A reindeer is not a horse with a T.V. Antenna!

Jack Nelson & Steve Rollins wrote, 'Frosty, The Snowman,' a carol in 1950, after they witnessed the success of John Marks' Rudolph. This is how it goes:

Frosty, the snowman
Was a jolly happy soul
With a corn-cob pipe and a button
nose
And two eyes made out of coal
Frosty the snowman
Is a fairy tale they say
He was made of snow,
but the children know
How he came to life one day!

FUN FEST!

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
Not cornflakes, but snow flakes!

The X'mas Tree is an evergreen fir tree because probably nothing else could survive in the cold polar regions, and because it is green all through the year, all over the world! The X'mas tree, a German tradition, started as early as the 16th Century. By the 1700s, it was widespread in Germany, then moved to England and through Pennsylvanian German immigrants to America.

These trees were decorated with ornaments, lights, candles, fake snow, toys etc. In Victorian times people decorated their trees with candies and cakes but by 1880, tree decorations became a commercial proposition like cards! Gifts are placed for the family at the base of the

tree. The carol related to the Christmas Tree goes partly like this:

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
How are thy leaves so verdant?
Not only in the summer time
But even in winter is thy prime

O Christmas Tree... verdant?
Each bough doth hold its tiny light
That makes each toy to sparkle bright.
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas tree
The candles shine out brightly!

Apart from the 'X'mas Tree which is a must, most families decorate their homes with a brightly lit star, mistletoe and holly and partake of Christmas cakes and turkey! Here is a carol on mistletoe and holly, which again is a favorite:

Oh by gosh, by golly,
It's time for mistletoe and holly
Tasty pheasants, Christmas presents
Country sides covered with snow
Oh by gosh, by jingle
It's time for carols and Kris Kringle!

Carol singing is essentially a part of Christmas. These carols kind of sum up X'mas for you. So even if you can't see Frosty, the snowman or Rudolph, the reindeer. We at Gokulam are

sure you can sing these carols and have a MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Cover Illustration: ***Jayaraj***

cures one of all eye problems!

There are several inscriptions to indicate the antiquity of the temple. According to one of them during King Rajendra II's reign the town was called Paravaipuram. It was probably named after the wife of Rajendra I, Puravainangai. This temple is mentioned as Paravai Easwaram Udaya Mahadevar Temple.

King Sibi was a righteous ruler. A sense of duty was of such importance to him, that he gave his flesh and his eyes to protect a dove which was stalked by an eagle. Legend has it that the Lord wanted to test Sibi and hence this drama was enacted.

About 10kms from Vizhupuram in Tamil Nadu, is a place called Panayapuram with a beautiful Shiva temple. Lord Shiva, here, is known as Nethrodharanar as he restored Sibi's eyesight in appreciation of the king's sense of duty in protecting his subjects. It is said that a visit to this temple

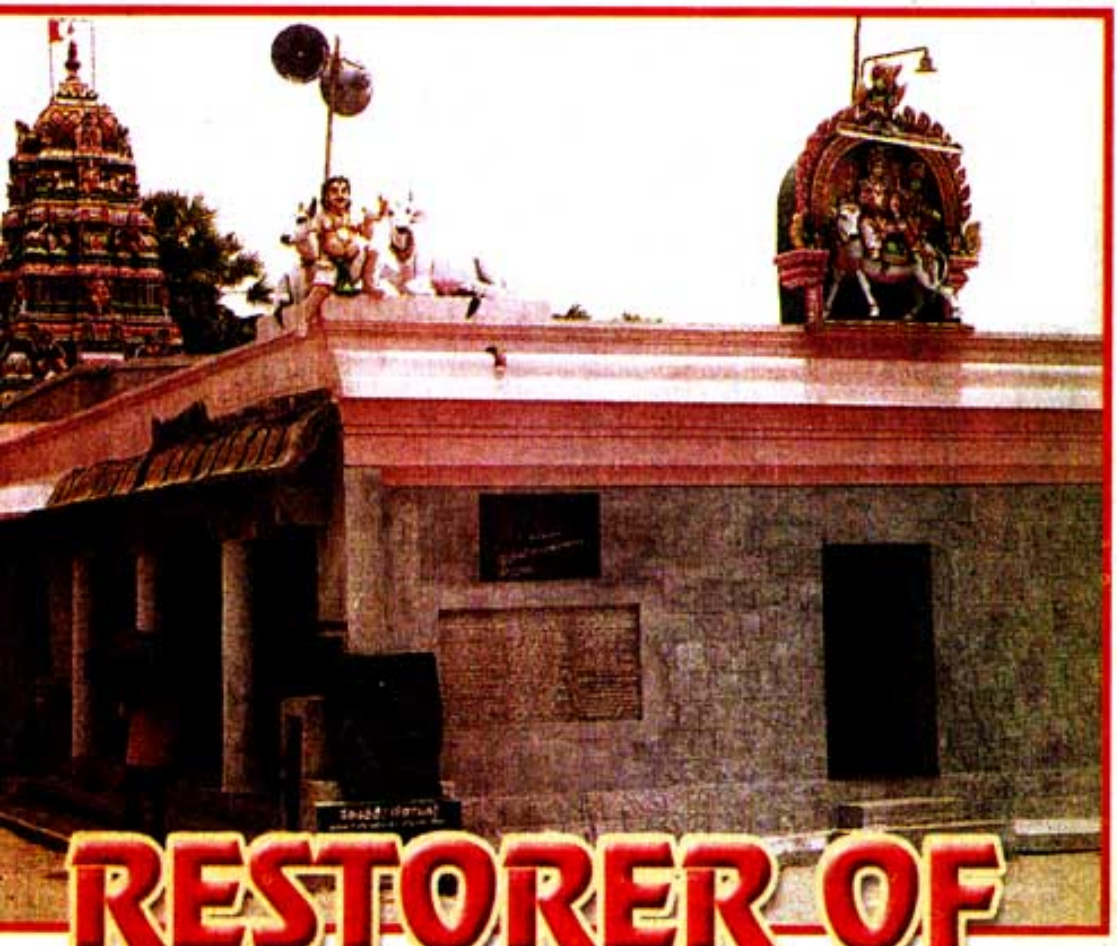
The various inscriptions in the temple indicate the continued patronage of several dynasties, such as the Cholas,

P.S

Pandyas, the Vijayanagar kings.

Yet other inscriptions in the temple indicate donation of lands and wealth for the upkeep of the temple, for various social activities, for the administration of the temple and for conducting various festivals in the temple.

The Sun God, to get rid of a curse is said to have worshipped the Lord here. As if to corroborate this, the sun's rays falls on the Sivalingam and then on Ambigai, in the first week of the tamil month of Chithirai. The latticed windows through which the sun's rays fall, bear testimony to the architectural splendour of ancient times.



RESTORER OF SIBI'S EYES!

UNITY IN

A safe and disciplined learning environment is the priority for all schools. Making uniforms mandatory ensures uniformity among children. Students feel that they are part of a team. Financial status of families and fashions of the day will not affect the dress of the students. Uniforms are certainly cheaper than designer dresses!

For security reasons too, uniforms are advisable. An intruder in the school compound will stand out among uniform clad students. On the other hand, if a student is missing from schoool, he can be easily identified and traced. Thus, I feel school uniform is a must.

- Parvathi S. Kumar,
Std V, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Tripunithara

School is not the place for children to show off. One must concentrate on studies. Some poor students may not be able to afford even school fees, let alone spend on pretty dresses. Discrimination amongst rich and poor could even affect academic performance of the latter. So it is preferable to have a uniform dress code.

- Bhoomika, Std IX,
Fatima High School, Ambarnath, Mumbai.

"I need a new dress", is a common refrain, some parents hear every month. If the school had a

QUESTION FOR THE MONTH

NEW YEAR is round the corner. Do you propose to make New Year resolutions? Share them with us. (Even if you don't believe in New Year resolutions. You may tell us why!)

Send us your views by 10.12.04. Each published entry will receive a prize of Rs.25/-. Remember to include details of your age, class, school and residential address. Those of you who are non-residents of India should send us a local (Indian) address too.

specific school uniform, two or three sets a year is all they need. Nowadays westernisation has set in, in all spheres. Some students might develop an inferiority complex if his or her friend wears a more modern dress. In many schools, students from all parts of the country attend. If they put on their uniforms there will be 'Unity in Diversity'!

- S. Divya, Std XI, Sri Sankara Vidyashram MHS School, Chennai

"Mom, what should I wear today? Which shoes?..." In many households this is an everyday question for the hassled working mothers! Schools should have uniform dress codes and once a week they could allow children to wear dresses of their choice.

I don't think uniforms are necessary after Std X as teenagers can decide for themselves. However general codes like "no jeans and tops," or "no skimpy dresses for girls, only salwars/chudidars" etc are okay.

- Yeshaswini Halthore, Std XI, Vijaya P.U. Bangalore

DIVERSITY

Today, students have a lot of freedom. Hence they get carried away easily. It is the duty of the school to maintain discipline. Wearing 'Casuals' to school may create problems. The rich kids will boast of a variety of dresses which the middle class cannot afford. Inferiorty complex is the result. If the choice of dress is left to students or their parents, each will have a different view. To avoid confusion, school uniforms should be compulsory.

- Supriya Padmanabhan, Std IX, Navrachana School, Vadodara

My opinion is schools should not have uniforms. I prefer colour dresses to uniforms because I can put on any dress before I leave for school. If there is a uniform, I will need to check if it is washed, ironed, shoes are polished etc. I will also have to search for a clean pair of socks. If I can wear anything, these hassles would not be there.

- Meera Unni, Std V, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Tripunithara.

j.disney
CAN YOU COME TO MY HOUSE? BRING PEPE TOO!
OK, SUGAR.
WONDER WHAT PRANKS HE IS UP TO, NOW!
KEEP COOL HONEY!
WHO ARE YOU? WHERE IS SUGAR?
I'M A REDINDIAN FROM AMERICA VISITING MY E-MAIL FRIEND SUGAR!
HA, HA! THE DISGUISE WAS GOOD, BUT YOUR VOICE GAVE YOU AWAY!
JUST IMAGINE A REDINDIAN BOY....
...WHO TRAVELS ALL OVER THE WORLD...
...HE MEETS STRANGE PEOPLE AND HAS FANTASTIC EXPERIENCES
MAY BE I'LL BECOME A POLAR BEAR!
STORY OF THE REDINDIAN BOY, NEXT MONTH!

WHO ARE WE?

COLOUR AND KEEP!

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